VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF

REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

07/2004 - 07/2009

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) is the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency for the Commonwealth. Virginia DRS employs approximately 1061 full-time professional, supervisory, paraprofessional, and support staff to accomplish its mission.

A. Agency Mission Statement

In partnership with people with disabilities and their families, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services collaborates with the public and private sectors to provide and advocate for the highest quality services that empower individuals with disabilities to maximize their employment, independence, and full inclusion into society.

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services Program can be divided into the broad divisions of Disability Determination Services, Field Rehabilitation Services, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, and Central Office which includes Community Based Services.

B. Workforce Development Plan

DRS is committed to developing and administrating an effective workforce development plan that anticipates staffing needs and determines what actions should be implemented to maintain a well-qualified work force. This plan describes the agency's major divisions and highlights current workforce staffing, recruitment issues and current training plans.

The plan addresses significant challenges facing the agency. These include an aging workforce, increasing numbers of retirement eligible employees, loss of expertise of experienced employees as they leave the Agency due to retirement, changing demographics and its impact on the agency culture, and an environment of continued change and complexity.

GAP analysis in the plan pulls together the information, defines the goals, rationales and action steps necessary to meet the challenges defined earlier. Recommendations include both formal and informal training of employees, greater communication among all staff (especially managers), greater planning efforts in all agency operations, and ongoing monitoring of the progress of the plan.

a. Current DRS Workforce Issues
♦ The common themes affecting all agency operations revolve around a work force population that is becoming increasingly retirement eligible during a period when products and services are becoming increasingly complex.

Significant numbers of employees are eligible for both reduced and unreduced retirement presently and those numbers will increase in the next few years.

♦ Like many other employers, our agency operations face the issue of staff retention. The societal stigma associated with multiple previous employers and multiple career changes during the course of an individual's lifetime has diminished, resulting in a much more mobile work force.

♦ The increasing complexity of tasks and volume of workloads impact the quality of customer service as well as employee morale.

♦ Outdated methods of management and supervision reduce quality and efficiency.

b. Gap Analysis and Recommended Action
♦ There is a definite need to ensure that the accumulated knowledge and expertise of employees nearing retirement is not lost. Both formal and informal training of newer employees will be needed to close this gap and prepare for succession planning.

♦ Updated and creative methods of recruitment should be implemented in order to attract a sufficient workforce.

♦ Advancement opportunities must be evaluated and developed in order to retain qualified employees.

♦ Stress reduction and caseload management training opportunities should be made available and encouraged.

C. Conclusions and Recommendations
These recommendations need to be accomplished during a time of decreased resources and significant environmental changes such as Order of Selection and the Social Security Administration's move to a totally paperless system. A different perspective on recruitment and retention initiatives will be needed to reflect the anticipated demographic changes in the work force population as employees retire. Relying on how things were done in the past will not be an option. Managers and agency planners will need to work collaboratively to meet the challenges with new and fresh approaches. Continuous monitoring of the plan is essential and necessary to ensure the agency is prepared for the issues defined here.

The following document details the impact on the Agency in these and related areas.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

WORKFORCE PLAN

JUNE 2004

I   OVERVIEW

- **Mission:** In partnership with people with disabilities and their families, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services collaborates with the public and private sectors to provide and advocate for the highest quality services that empower individuals with disabilities to maximize their employment, independence and full inclusion into society.

- **Core Responsibilities/Programs:**   The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services Program can be divided into the broad divisions of Disability Determination Services, Field Rehabilitation Services, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, and Central Office which includes Community Based Services. Organizational objectives and descriptions of each of these functions follows:

  Disability Determination Services works in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide accurate, timely decisions on claims for disability benefits. DDS provides accurate, timely, efficient and cost effective evaluations of medical evidence related to claims filed by citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia for benefits under Title II and Title XVI of the Social Security Act, as well as Title XIX Medicaid claims. These evaluations result in the adjudication or "determination" of claims at the initial claims stage, the continuing disability review stage and other appellate points in the disability adjudicative process.

This unit is comprised of an Administrative Office, consisting of the DDS administrator and key department coordinators, and four Regional Offices. Each Regional Office operates under the supervision of a Regional Director and in accordance with the requirements of state agency and federal operating procedures.

The Social Security Administration instituted the disability program in order to provide benefits to citizens who are unable to work due to a severe medically determinable impairment. SSA criteria for benefit qualification states that in order to qualify for benefits, the individual must be unable to perform substantial gainful activity due to a medically determinable impairment which has lasted or is expected to last at least twelve consecutive months or result in death. SSA established the policies and procedures the DDS must follow in the processing of disability claims.

Claims for disability benefits are sent from SSA field offices around the state to one of four regional DDS offices. DDS is responsible for obtaining all medical and other pertinent information regarding each claimant. DDS is also responsible for obtaining a current medical and /or psychological status on each claimant if there is insufficient information within the accessible medical records or if no current medical records exist. Once all pertinent information is obtained, the DDS analysts, in consultation with state agency consultants, determine eligibility for benefits using SSA Disability Program regulations and guidelines.

The **Field Rehabilitative Services Division (FRS)** operates the Virginia Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) for individuals with disabilities other than visual impairments. The FRS mission is: In partnership with people with disabilities, the DRS Field Rehabilitation Services Division assists individuals with disabilities to make informed choices that will maximize their positive employment outcomes through a coordinated and integrated service delivery system.

The VR program operates through a decentralized structure that includes thirty-six field offices, five regional offices, an administrative unit in the central office and two rehabilitation engineering fabrication facilities. The field/regional/central office hierarchy has existed over the years with only slight modifications. The number of regions has increased from two to four regions and then expanded to five regions. Geographical boundaries for regions and field office coverage have moved repeatedly in attempts to conform to regional boundaries of other agencies or to equalize workloads. Attempts have been made to reduce the number of field offices, but ultimately, few offices have been closed as transportation problems make it difficult for many consumers to access services that are not available in or near their communities.

There is little ambiguity about the division mission, vision and objectives. We are, and will be, about achieving employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. Shifts in resources have been designed to support this as a priority and to place as many resources as possible at the intersection between the consumer and the direct service provider. Performance measures for the division have remained the same for many years. They are:

- Number of Employment Plans Initiated
- Number of Cases Closed with the Consumer Successfully Employed
- Consumer Wages
- Percent of Consumers Engaged in Competitive Employment
- Percent of Consumers with Significant Disabilities

Central Office Administration provides administrative support to Agency 262 (Department of Rehabilitative Services), 263 (Virginia Rehabilitative Center for the Blind, 606 (Virginia Board for People with Disabilities), 702 (Department of the Blind and Vision Impaired), and 751 (Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing). Administrative support is provided in areas of Fiscal Services, Human Resources, Policy and Planning, Procurement and Information Systems. In addition to administrative support, Central Office Administration includes the Community Based Services Division of DRS, which provides direct client service through state funded programs and provides support and resources to Vocational Rehabilitation consumers and to other persons with disabilities through funding for Centers for Independent Living, Virginia Assistive Technology System, Assistive Technology Loan Fund and other grant funded initiatives. Community Based Services programs allow individuals with the most severe disabilities to live independently and, in many cases, obtain and maintain employment. Strong support for these community based services, versus nursing home or other institutional care, exists in state government and the disability community.

Community Based Services staff are available to provide technical assistance and consultation in a wide variety of areas, including assistive technology, accessing community based services and spinal cord injury services, case management for people who have long term needs, accessing available resources and loans for Assistive Technology, disability services boards and the ADA.

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) is a public, nonprofit facility operated by the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS). The Center is available for persons with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities and those in need of multiple services. Comprehensive services that require an interdisciplinary approach are provided on a residential and outpatient basis through a variety of programs and services. WWRC's Employment and Occupational Skills Training Department provides vocational training in growth occupations to prepare individuals with disabilities for competitive entry level employment.

WWRC is a modern campus-style facility that is internationally known for developing new ideas and techniques for the advancement and independence of persons with disabilities and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Its Vocational Training Programs are accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE). WWRC also serves as a State Operated Secondary Educational Program, as endorsed by the Virginia Department of Education and a Post-Secondary Educational Institution by the U. S. Department of Education. Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center provides a comprehensive array of therapeutic medical rehabilitative services using a transdisciplinary approach. These services are available to all individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in medical and/or vocational rehabilitation programs either as non-residential outpatients or as outpatients residing at WWRC using any of the housing options available.

The transdisciplinary team, together with the consumer and any involved caregivers, develops an individualized therapeutic medical rehabilitation program focused on meeting that consumer's specific needs and rehabilitation goals to enable the consumer to achieve the highest desired level of self-sufficiency possible in preparation for community integration and vocational pursuits.

WWRC's Medical Rehabilitation Services Division is licensed to provide services by Medicare, Medicaid, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and is certified as a Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF).

All medical service providers are certified by their professional organizations and licensed or certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The mission of WWRC Vocational Services is to successfully assist individuals with disabilities in becoming prepared for employment, higher education, and/or other career development goals by maximizing employment, occupational, and self-sufficiency skills through the integration of rehabilitation, occupation, and education/training technology.

Qualified instructional and support staff deliver integrated curricula and instruction utilizing state-of-the-art occupational related equipment and technologies to meet job market demands and individual consumer learning needs. Business and industry advisory committees provide instrumental guidance and direction to overall training programs and services and serve as partners in course planning, curricula development, consumer preparation, and program evaluation.

WWRC presently offers nine (9) on-site occupational skills training programs, representing more than thirty-five (35) different vocational objectives. The External Training Option (ETO) provides training in over 100 occupational areas in the local community surrounding WWRC, with expansions to consumer home communities in progress. In addition, modified training programs are available, upon request, for anyone desiring training in a vocation that is not a part of the typical course offerings, or who requires selective placement for disability related reasons. Training curricula may be abbreviated or adapted for these consumers. Full course descriptions and program completion requirements can be found in Appendix D.

The Student Internship Program (SIP) provides opportunities to determine if trainees are job-ready. Interns are typically placed with employers across the state in the last four to six weeks of vocational training. The internship experience reduces anxiety participants may face on a job, provides actual work experience and serves as a final evaluation of training success. In the local area alone, more than 100 employers participate in the Student Internship Program annually. In addition, consumers may enroll in internship experiences which take place in their home communities. This statewide Student Internship Program is coordinated by sponsors, Center counselors and Vocational Training Department staff.

- **DRS Values:**
  - We value creative problem solving, collaboration, and teamwork in recognizing and responding to customer needs.
  - We value services that are customer focused.
  - We value customer, partner, and employee input to continually improve processes, services and results.
  - We value accessibility, awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, and advocacy for resources to meet those needs.
  - We value fairness, respect, and responsiveness in our actions and communications.
  - We value recognizing and rewarding excellence and innovation, and the continuous development of all staff.
  - We value providing the highest quality services, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
  - We value a secure work environment, employee health and wellness, and diversity in our workforce.
  - We value honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior.

II   ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT NEEDS

WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

DRS CURRENT ASSESSMENT

- As shown by the chart below, approximately fifty percent of the entire DRS workforce is age 50 or older. Statewide average (all State agencies) of individuals age 50 or older is 39.21 of the classified workforce. For reference, statistics and charts reflecting DRS (Parent) or DRS include DRS employees and WWRC employees (Agencies 262 and 203). Statements referring to Agency 262 reflects only those positions assigned to DRS (does not include WWRC positions).

Dept of Rehabilitative Service (Parent)
Age Range

Age Range	Count	Cum.	Percent
< 25 yrs	10	10	0.94
25 <= X < 30 yrs	53	63	4.96
30 <= X < 35 yrs	75	138	7.02
35 <= X < 40 yrs	99	237	9.27
40 <= X < 45 yrs	135	372	12.64
45 <= X < 50 yrs	164	536	15.36
50 <= X < 55 yrs	271	807	25.37
55 <= X < 60 yrs	178	985	16.67
60 <= X < 65 yrs	72	1057	6.74
>= 65 yrs	11	1068	1.03

PERCENT
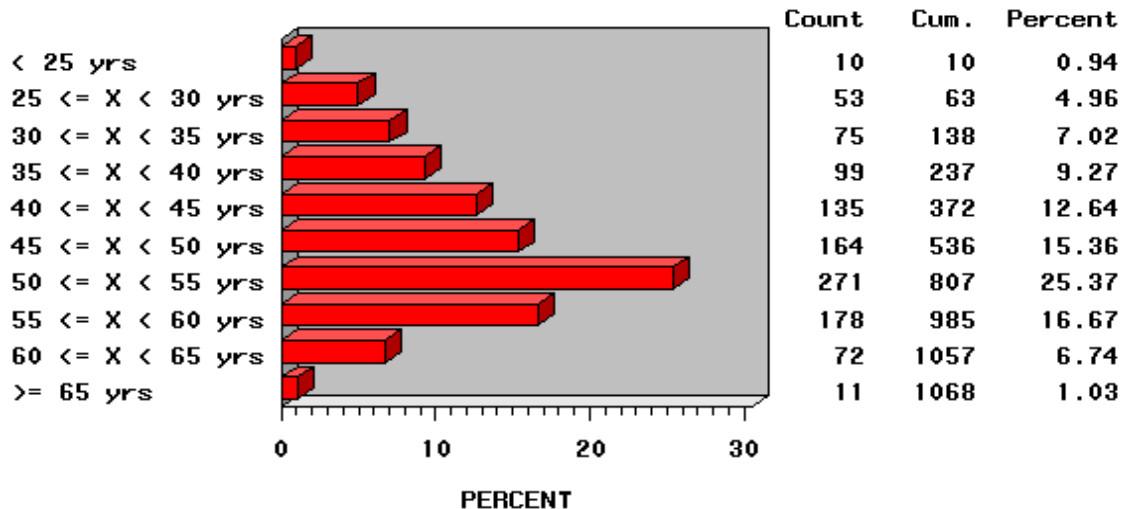
As of February 29, 2004
(Classified Employees Only)

DRS (PARENT) STATISTICS REFLECT BOTH DRS AND WWRC EMPLOYEES

Statewide
Age Range

Age Range	Count	Cum.	Percent
25 <= X < 30 yrs	4888	4888	6.86
30 <= X < 35 yrs	6813	11701	9.56
35 <= X < 40 yrs	8337	20038	11.70
40 <= X < 45 yrs	10736	30774	15.06
45 <= X < 50 yrs	12547	43321	17.61
50 <= X < 55 yrs	12103	55424	16.98
55 <= X < 60 yrs	8688	64112	12.19
60 <= X < 65 yrs	4966	69078	6.97
< 25 yrs	2187	71265	3.07
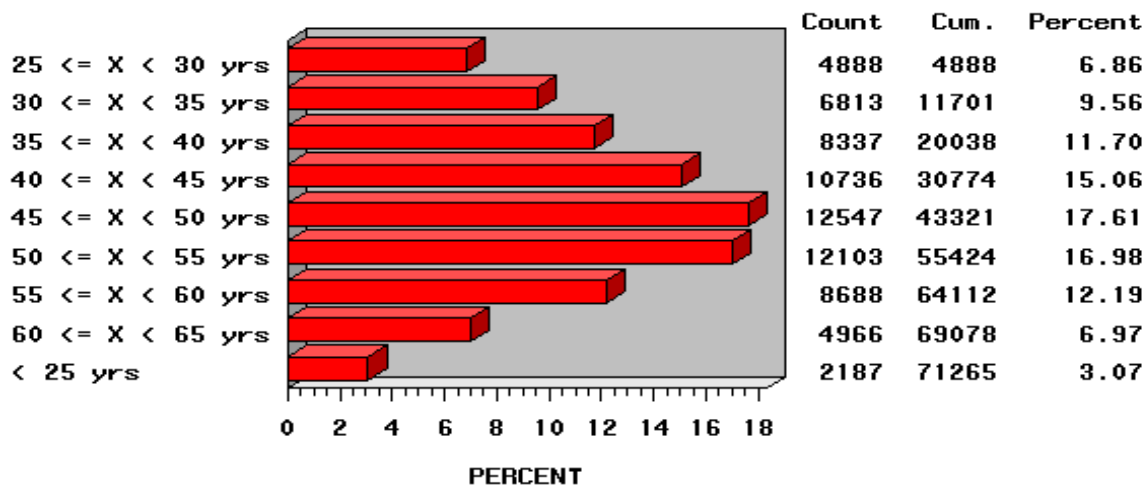
PERCENT

As of December 31, 2003
(Classified Employees Only)

- A comparison of demographic information for DRS as compared to the Statewide demographic information indicates:
  - o Statewide percentage of Black and Hispanic employees is higher than that of DRS. DRS, however, has a higher percentage of American Indian and Asian employees.
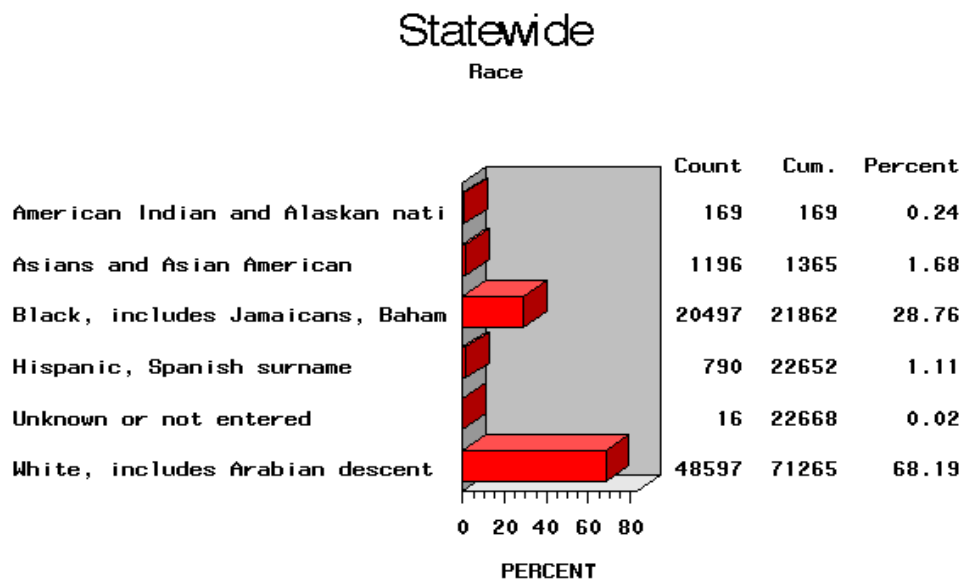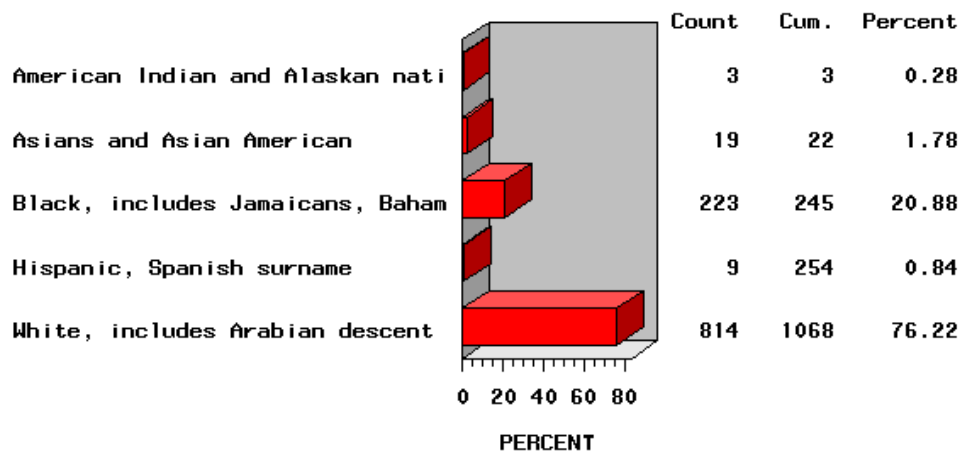
DRS (PARENT) STATISTICS REFLECT BOTH DRS AND WWRC EMPLOYEES.

Statewide
Race

	Count	Cum.	Percent
American Indian and Alaskan nati	169	169	0.24
Asians and Asian American	1196	1365	1.68
Black, includes Jamaicans, Baham	20497	21862	28.76
Hispanic, Spanish surname	790	22652	1.11
Unknown or not entered	16	22668	0.02
White, includes Arabian descent	48597	71265	68.19

0 20 40 60 80
PERCENT

As of December 31, 2003
(Classified Employees Only)

Dept of Rehabilitative Service (Parent)
Race

|	Count	Cum.	Percent
American Indian and Alaskan nati	3	3	0.28
Asians and Asian American	19	22	1.78
Black, includes Jamaicans, Baham	223	245	20.88
Hispanic, Spanish surname	9	254	0.84
White, includes Arabian descent	814	1068	76.22

0 20 40 60 80
PERCENT

As of February 29, 2004
(Classified Employees Only)

o Approximately seventy-three percent of DRS employees are female compared to approximately fifty-three percent for Statewide figures.

DRS (PARENT) STATISTICS REFLECT BOTH DRS AND WWRC EMPLOYEES.

Dept of Rehabilitative Service (Parent)
Gender

	Count	Cum.	Percent
Female	773	773	72.38
Male	295	1068	27.62
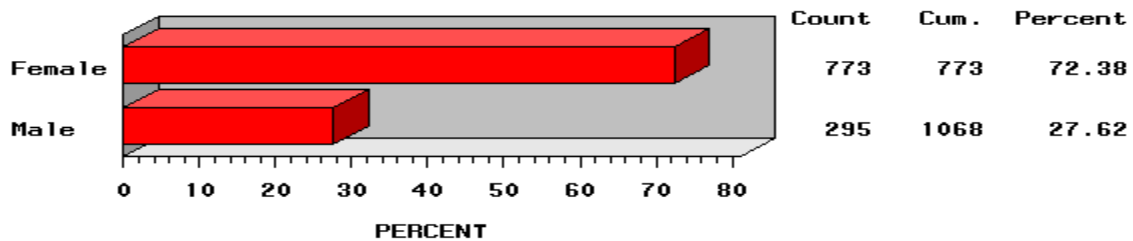
PERCENT

As of February 29, 2004
(Classified Employees Only)

Statewide
Gender

	Count	Cum.	Percent
Female	37641	37641	52.82
Male	33624	71265	47.18
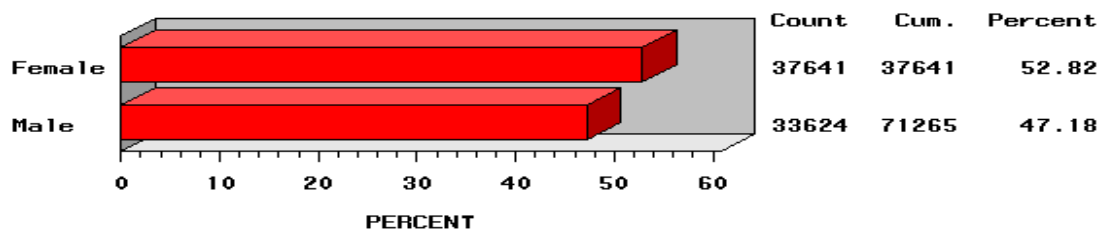
PERCENT

As of December 31, 2003
(Classified Employees Only)

- Resignations of DRS employees total .1 percent of total workforce versus a Statewide percentage of .2 percent. The percentage of the workforce leaving DRS due to better jobs or leaving area is higher than the Statewide percentages. DRS experienced a reduction of 2.4% of the workforce through retirements versus a Statewide reduction rate of .9%.

DRS (PARENT) STATISTICS REFLECT BOTH DRS AND WWRC EMPLOYEES.

Dept of Rehabilitative Service (Parent)
TURNOVER
Category=Resignations
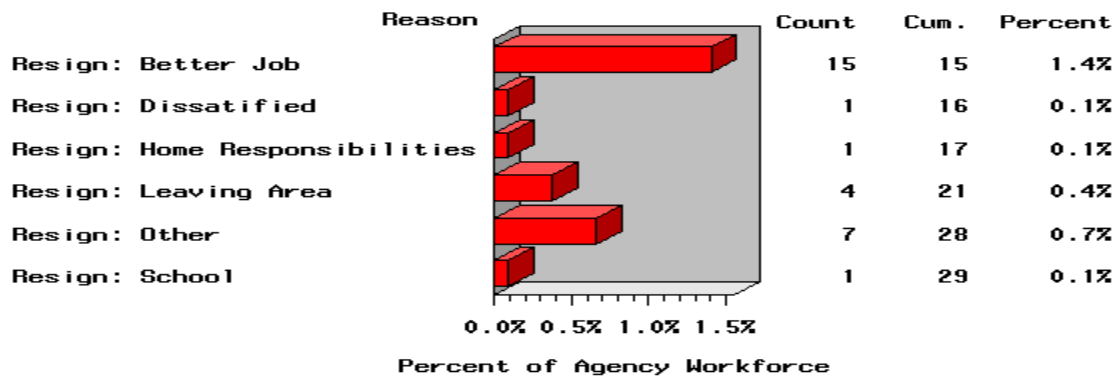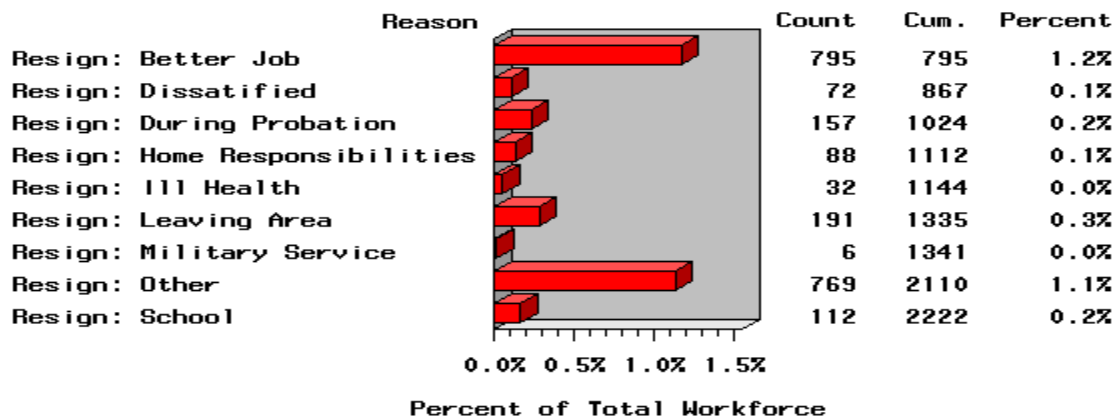
Reason	Count	Cum.	Percent
Resign: Better Job	15	15	1.4%
Resign: Dissatified	1	16	0.1%
Resign: Home Responsibilities	1	17	0.1%
Resign: Leaving Area	4	21	0.4%
Resign: Other	7	28	0.7%
Resign: School	1	29	0.1%

0.0% 0.5% 1.0% 1.5%

Percent of Agency Workforce

Fiscal Year 2004 YTD as of February 29, 2004
(Classified Employees Only)

Statewide
TURNOVER
Category=Resignations

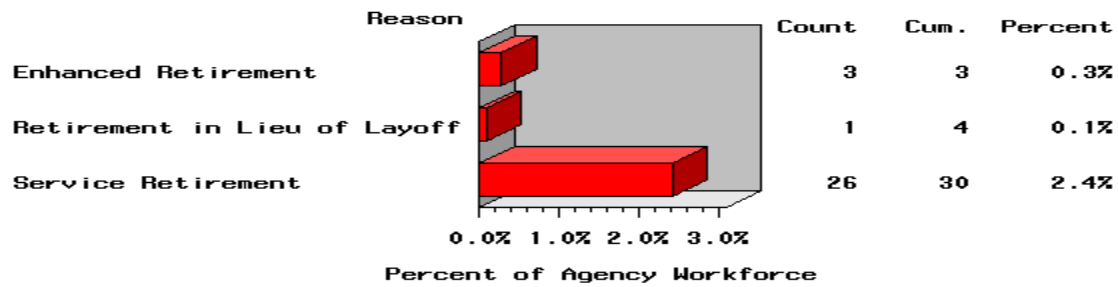| Reason	Count	Cum.	Percent
Resign: Better Job	795	795	1.2%
Resign: Dissatified	72	867	0.1%
Resign: During Probation	157	1024	0.2%
Resign: Home Responsibilities	88	1112	0.1%
Resign: Ill Health	32	1144	0.0%
Resign: Leaving Area	191	1335	0.3%
Resign: Military Service	6	1341	0.0%
Resign: Other	769	2110	1.1%
Resign: School	112	2222	0.2%

0.0% 0.5% 1.0% 1.5%

Percent of Total Workforce

Fiscal Year 2004 YTD as of December 31, 2003
(Classified Employees Only)

DRS (PARENT) THESE STATISTICS REFLECT BOTH DRS AND WWRC EMPLOYEES.
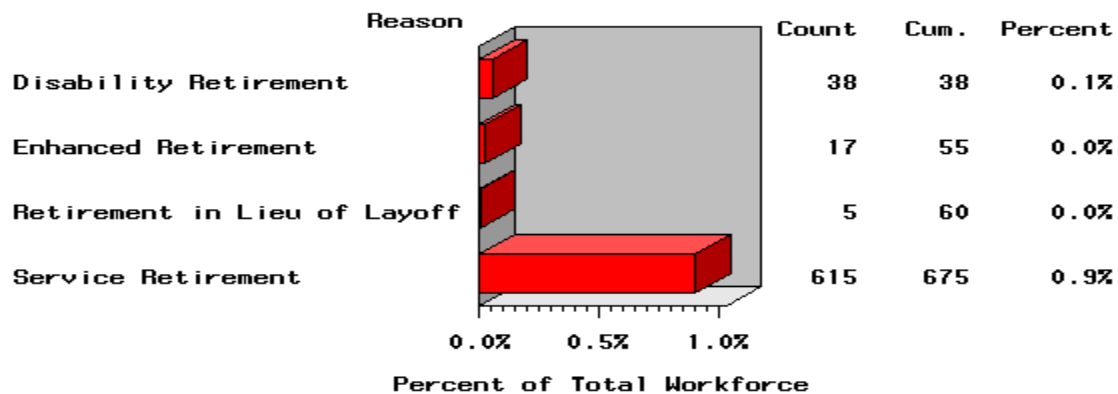
Dept of Rehabilitative Service (Parent)
TURNOVER
Category=Retirements

Reason	Count	Cum.	Percent
Enhanced Retirement	3	3	0.3%
Retirement in Lieu of Layoff	1	4	0.1%
Service Retirement	26	30	2.4%

0.0% 1.0% 2.0% 3.0%

Percent of Agency Workforce

Fiscal Year 2004 YTD as of February 29, 2004
(Classified Employees Only)

Statewide
TURNOVER
Category=Retirements

| Reason	Count	Cum.	Percent
Disability Retirement	38	38	0.1%
Enhanced Retirement	17	55	0.0%
Retirement in Lieu of Layoff	5	60	0.0%
Service Retirement	615	675	0.9%

0.0% 0.5% 1.0%

Percent of Total Workforce

Fiscal Year 2004 YTD as of December 31, 2003
(Classified Employees Only)

AGENCY 262 SUPPORT STAFF CURRENT ASSESSMENT

- One hundred and seventeen positions assigned to Agency 262 (Department of Rehabilitative Services) are support staff. Agency 262 Support Staff provides Human Resources, Fiscal, Procurement, Policy and Planning, and other support services for Agency 262 (Department of Rehabilitative Services) , 263 (Virginia Rehabilitative Center for the Blind), 606 (Virginia Board for People with Disabilities), 702 (Department of the Blind and Vision Impaired), and 751 (Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing). More than half the employees are over 50 years old. About 1 in every 4 employees is over 55 years old. More than 1 in 5 employees (greater than 20%) is over 50 years old with 25 years or more of service in 2004. Nearly 1 out of every 6 employees (over 15%) is at or above 30 years service in 2004. One in every 5 employees (20%) will pass 30 years service in 2007. There are significant opportunities for employees to take reduced pensions over the next few years. About half of the Support Staff employees will be eligible for either reduced or unreduced benefits in 2004.

- The statistics for the Agency 262 Support Staff are reflective of the Agency as a whole. For the Total Agency 262, about half of the workforce is over 50 years old. About 1 in 4 is over 55 years old. Nearly 1 out of every 3 has greater than 30 years service. One in every 5 employees will be eligible for unreduced benefits by 2005. A significant threat of increased retirements exists due to the combination of reduced and unreduced pension eligibility, along with an aging population of employees. This is true for both the Agency as a whole, and the Support Staff.

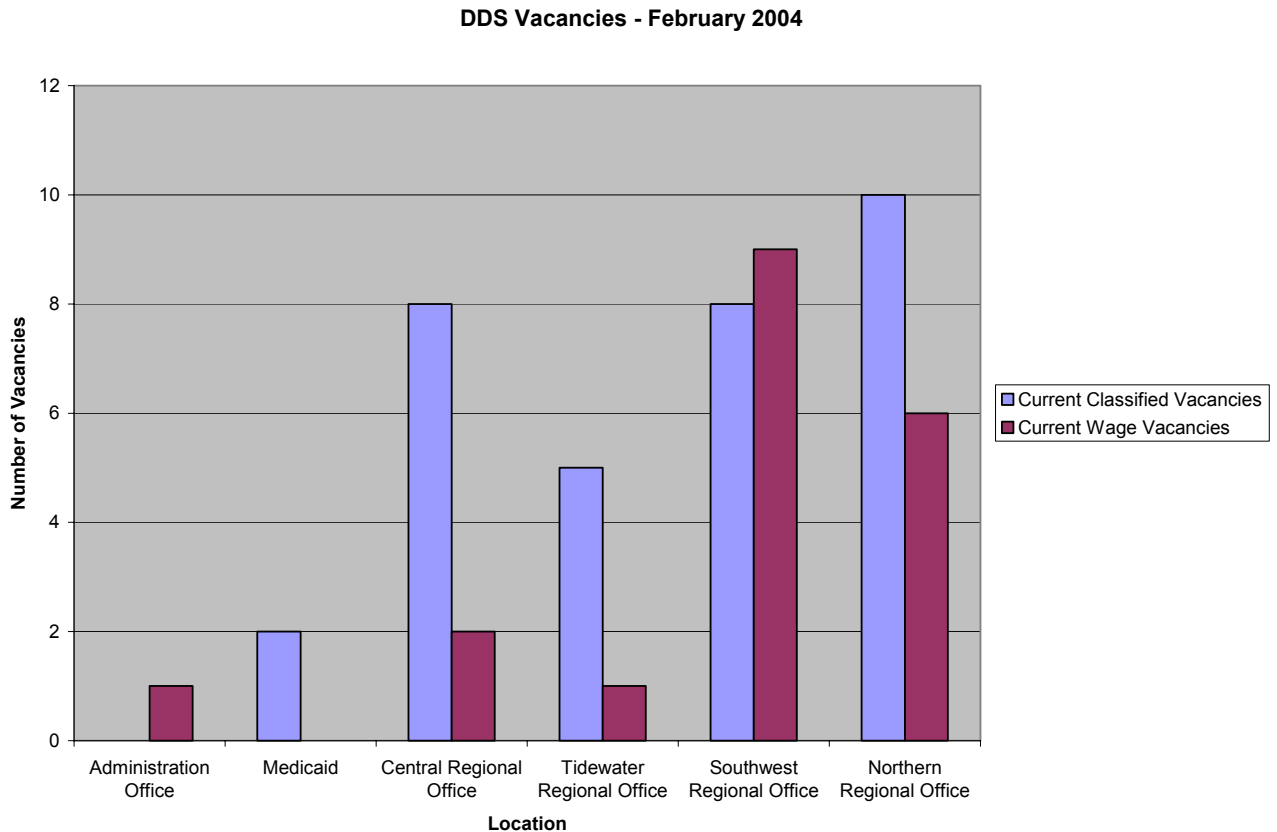**Percent of Years Service for Agency 262 Support Staff**
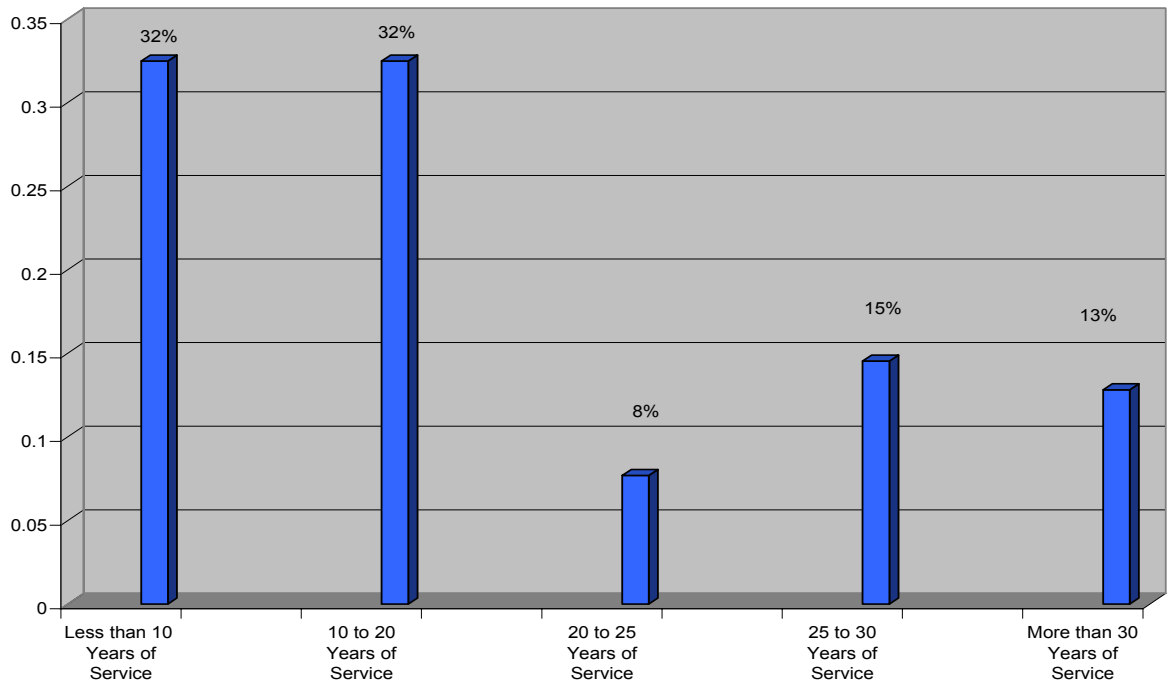
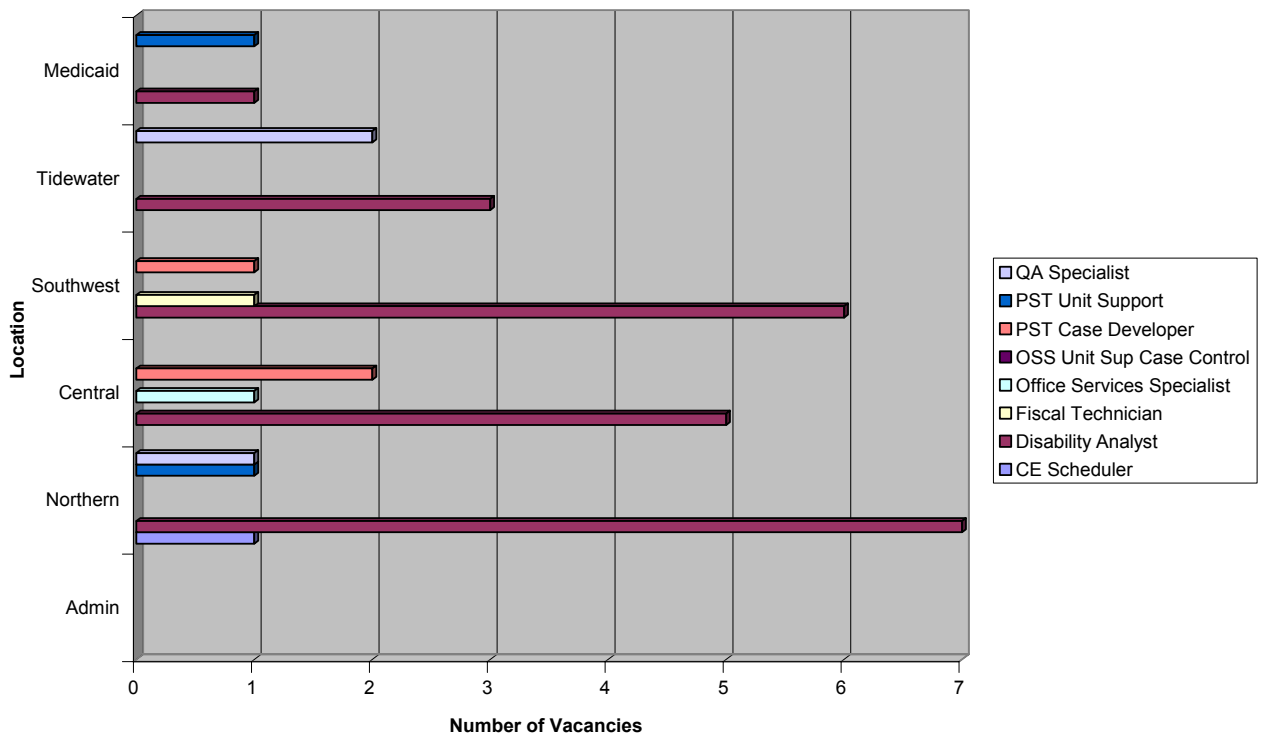## Percent Spread of Age of Workforce forAgency 262 Support Staff
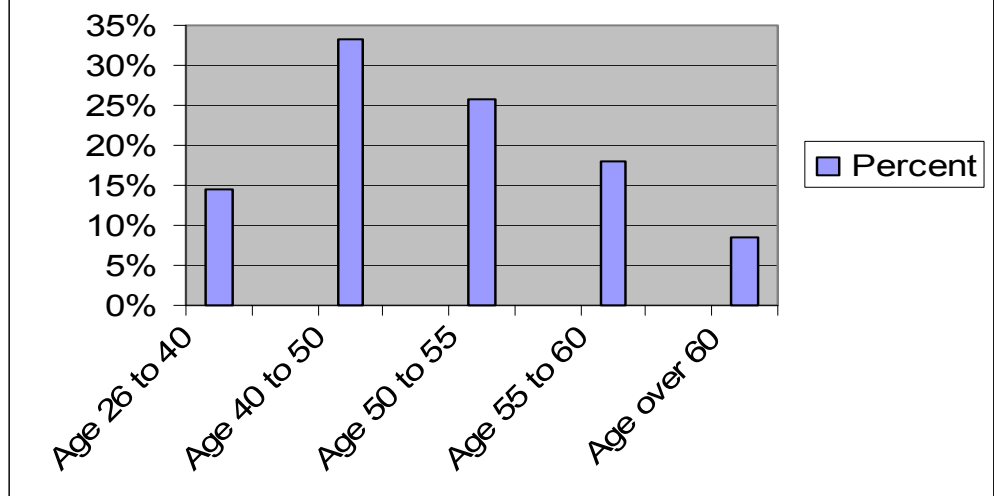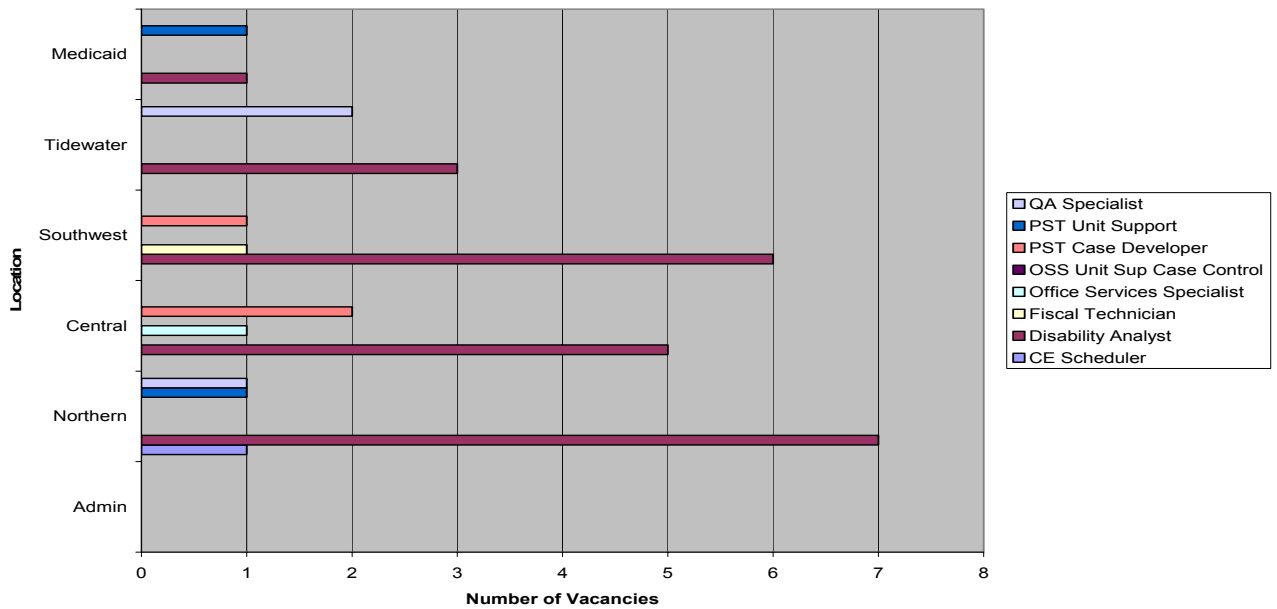
DDS CURRENT ASSESSMENT

- Currently, the DDS has 20 employees with 30 years or more of service to the State. This represents approximately 6% of the division's employees. In addition, there are 142 out of 303 (47%) employees who are age 50 or older. This demonstrates a significant staffing challenge to this agency within the next few years.

- In reviewing individuals eligible for retirement within the next year it appears DDS could lose 22.7 percent of disability examiners.

DDS Vacancies - February 2004

DDS Classified Vacancies by Work Title & Location

Legend:
- QA Specialist
- PST Unit Support
- PST Case Developer
- OSS Unit Sup Case Control
- Office Services Specialist
- Fiscal Technician
- Disability Analyst
- CE Scheduler

DDS Wage Vacancies by Title & Location

Legend:
- QA Specialist
- PST Unit Support
- PST Case Developer
- OSS Unit Sup Case Control
- Office Services Specialist
- Fiscal Technician
- Disability Analyst
- CE Scheduler

FRS CURRENT ASSESSMENT

- The average age of FRS employees is 49 years. The average years of service for FRS employees is 16.9. Thirty-four percent of employees have less than 10 years of experience. This is approximately the same percentage of employees with 25 or more years of service. The average salary is $41,998. These demographics are consistent with those for the agency as a whole.

- Turnover is an issue for certain positions and for certain locations. Positions that are subject to turnover are VR counselors, specialty counselors, including substance abuse and long term mentally ill, rehabilitation counselors for the deaf and placement counselors. Persons leaving these positions report a variety of reasons for separation including transfers to other positions within the agency, retirement, moving to other agencies for higher pay, particularly to school systems, the Veterans Administration or the federal government. Turnover has been particularly disruptive to service delivery in Northern Virginia where an abundance of better paying jobs. One concern as we look ahead is that new employees will not have the commitment and job loyalty that was often characteristic of employees who are now approaching retirement age. Literature tells us that young employees will not stay in jobs for a lifetime. The rate of vacancies is expected to increase.

Breakdown of FRS Positions

Pie chart data labels: 9.6, 7, 13, 26, 4, 7.1, 12, 5, 54, 30, 20, 9, 198

Legend:
- Vacancies
- Long Term Disability
- Part-time
- Central Office (includes ESU & OESSP)
- Regional Directors
- Counselors
- Lead Counselors
- Vocational Evaluators
- PSTS
- OSS
- Rehabilitation Engineer
- Business Development Specialists
- All Other
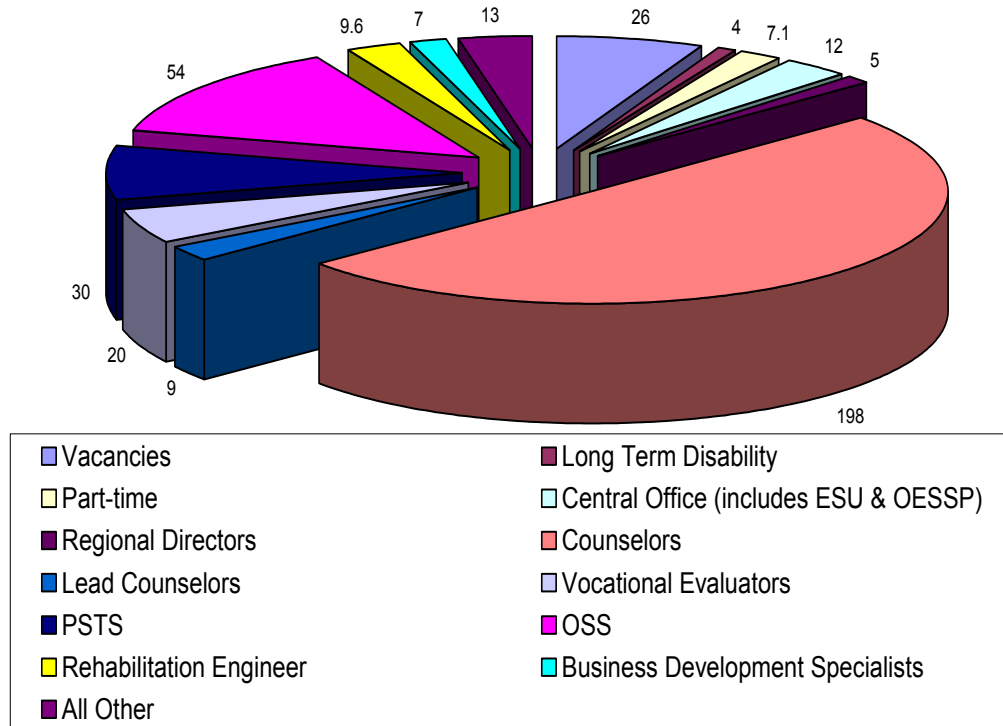
- One of the most significant changes in FRS structure has to do with the composition of the hierarchical layers. At all levels clerical support has been significantly reduced. At the field office level changes are noticeable in the increase in direct service staff as the ratio of clerical to direct service staff has declined. Increases in numbers of program support technicians senior, in placement counselors and specialty counselors, specifically substance abuse and long term mentally ill counselors, have increased the number of direct service providers. The number of field managers has declined from 21 in the late 1990s to 17 currently. Two of the five regional directors also function as field managers.

- Demands on field managers have multiplied in response to Disability Services Board initiatives, mandated involvement with local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop service centers, partnerships with local school systems, partnerships with departments of social services to collaboratively serve TANF recipients and expanded collaborative relationships with other community partners. Turnover in direct service delivery positions places additional demands on managers as they must manage vacant caseloads to ensure continuity of services to consumers on vacant caseloads. There are fewer managers now than in the recent past and their duties are significantly more far reaching.

- Changes have occurred in the regional offices as well. For much of the 1980s and 1990s, regional offices were staffed with a regional director and support staff, rehabilitation engineers, marketing specialists, regional training coordinators, and vendor services specialists. Regional directors managed these employees who had region wide impact upon the coordination of a regional network of service providers and on community outreach. For a time both marketing and rehabilitation engineering staff reported to managers outside of the division. These positions now have returned to regional director supervision.

- Regional directors continue to oversee all regional VR operations, to provide a linkage between central office administration while customizing services and programs to fit needs and resources of the regions. They manage the allocation of internal resources including personnel, case service and administrative funds with little of the manpower that previously existed to assist them. Like field managers, regions directors now exercise a much broader role in developing and maintaining relationships with a variety of community service partners, some mandated partners, and some which create opportunities to blend fiscal resources and extend direct service capacity. Like field managers, regional directors have more responsibility and less support to carry it out.

- At the same time that field and regional offices have refocused resources on direct service priorities, VR management in the central office has gotten leaner. No longer is there a VR director, an operations manager, a business manager, and a marketing and rehabilitation engineering manager. Productivity has not suffered significantly as a result of reducing regional and central office resources. The VR program continues to serve more than 25,000 consumers each year with approximately 4,000 consumers achieving a satisfactory employment goal each year.

- Field offices report issues related to support staff coverage. The issues differ from small offices in which there may be only one office services specialist, to large offices with more support and with competing demands. Just the logistics of assigning coverage when the office service specialist is out for a short time can be difficult; it can be extremely disruptive when short or long term absences occur. In Northern Virginia many of the support staff are contract employees. Turnover tends to be high in these offices and training new employees is a recurring drain on existing support staff resources.

WWRC CURRENT ASSESSMENT
- WWRC currently has 23 staff members who are eligible to retire. Of these 23 there appears to be an equal distribution of professional and paraprofessional positions. Only 2 of the 23 positions are nursing positions; consistent with national trends it is anticipated that filling these nursing positions will be challenging. In addition to the difficulty recruiting nursing staff, it is even more difficult to find qualified nurses with experience in rehabilitation. The remaining 21 employees are instructors, trades staff, clinical, administrative and information services staff. Recent pools would suggest that an adequate supply of workers are available to meet the demands of these jobs. Of lesser certainty is the degree to which new workers can perform at a level currently being provided by these veteran staff with 30 plus years of experience. Also an issue of concern is the differing generational work characteristics found in the typical entry level worker as compared to the current veteran staff.

- WWRC currently has 56 staff members who will be eligible to retire in 5 years. Of these 56 there appears to be an equal distribution of professional and paraprofessional positions. Eleven of the 56 positions are nurses or attendants: consistent with national trends it is anticipated that filling these nursing/attendant positions will be challenging. In addition to the difficulty recruiting nursing staff, it is even more difficult to find qualified nurses with experience in rehabilitation. The remaining 45 employees are instructors, trades staff, clinical, administrative and information services staff. Recent pools would suggest that an adequate supply of workers are available to meet the demands of these jobs. Of lesser certainty is the degree to which new workers can perform at a lever currently being provided by these veteran staff with 30 plus years of experience. Also an issue of concern is the differing generational work characteristics found in the typical entry level worker as compared to the current veteran staff.

- As of December 2003, 51.19% of classified WWRC employees are age 50 or older as compared to a Statewide percentage of 39.21%.

- In reviewing turnover data for WWRC, the percentage of resignations due to better job opportunities or dissatisfaction on the part of the employee is higher than the Statewide average.

- All Center medical staff receive an intensive orientation to medical and therapeutic rehabilitation practice. An active in-service program provides continuing professional growth. This highly specialized level of service attracts nursing and therapy affiliates from colleges & universities and technical schools throughout the United States.

- Retirements (service, in lieu of layoff and enhanced retirements) percentage for WWRC is higher that the Statewide average.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

DRS RECRUITMENT
- Vacancies are listed with the RECRUIT listing which is a Statewide system for capturing all State vacancies. This listing is available for review through the Internet and is accessible by visitors at Virginia Employment Commission locations throughout the State. Vacancies are also listed on DRS' website and are distributed to over eighty organizations/facilities including organizations dedicated to assisting minorities, females and individuals with disabilities.

- Advertising is somewhat limited, in that budgeting for advertising expenses was significantly reduced over a year ago. Advertising now is composed of small ads with limited information including direction to the agency's web site address for full details about the opening and mailing lists.

- The Disabilities Services Agencies' web site is in development to include a Career Center. Currently, the web site includes an introduction to applicants that expresses values shared by the agencies and an introduction into the agency's culture. It briefly describes the types of positions within the agency and provides a job listing for all available positions. Project plans for the Career Center include: employee snapshots which provide employee vignettes of their job requirements and their personal motivation, tips for applying for positions and on interviewing skills, benefits to employees, and information about working in Virginia.

- Additional activities include enhanced New Employee Orientation linked to the Career Center. Human Resource Intranet pages are being updated to provide employees with easily accessible information.

DDS RECRUITMENT ISSUES
- Currently all recruitment and hiring has been suspended per orders from Social Security Administration due to the Continuing Resolution issued by Congress.

- DDS experiences difficulty in recruiting in the following areas:
    - Northern Virginia and Central Regions - contract clerical staff positions are difficult to fill due to low skill level
    - Northern Virginia Region - supervisors/case consultants due to limited pool of experienced/professional staff
    - Tidewater Region - analyst positions
    - Southwest Region - analyst positions due to lack of applicants with knowledge, skills and abilities and non-competitive salary

FRS RECRUITMENT ISSUES

- Some significant changes have been noted in applicant pools. There are significantly fewer applicants for VR counselor and vocational evaluator positions. Frequently the qualified applicants, those that are screened in for consideration, are recent graduates from master's programs. In many cases they are the best qualified candidate, but they lack relevant experience. Training new employees in these positions is time consuming for the manager and/or other staff, and it takes a long period of time before a new employee can function independently.

- Experience has shown that it is more difficult to fill vacant positions with qualified applicants in rural areas of the state. The far Southwest, the Winchester area and the Southside area including South Boston, Danville and Martinsville are locations that have had difficulty attracting qualified candidates.

- Also difficult to attract, but in great demand, are employees with special communication skills. At one time this need applied only to sign language interpreters. Increasingly it applies to foreign language speakers that are needed to communicate with the diverse populations served by FRS.

- The FRS workforce has undergone significant change with respect to competencies and credentials. Federal legislation established new Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) standards for rehabilitation counselors and vocational evaluators. Both are required, by 2008 to have Masters Degrees in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field or to be eligible to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or Certified Vocational Evaluator examination. Since 1999, 59 FRS employees completed or are about to complete a master's program with funding provided by DRS. Ninety-seven other counselors and 9 vocational evaluators are certified counselors or evaluators. We have a workforce serving consumers that is better qualified and more knowledgeable than ever before.

- The higher standards for qualified personnel surely contribute to better services for consumers. It does, however, create difficulties in finding qualified candidates. The size of applicant pools for counselor positions has decreased remarkably and it is not unusual to advertise multiple times before attracting a reasonable pool of applicants. Finding qualified vocational evaluators and rehabilitation engineers is challenging as there are few with the training and experience to perform these jobs.

WWRC RECRUITMENT ISSUES
- Recruitment for nursing personnel (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and nursing assistants) is problematic and consistent with national trends. Attracting applicants with experience in rehabilitation is also difficult.

<u>OTHER WORKFORCE ISSUES</u>

- New regulatory changes will create a shift in the type of workforce within DDS.

- Analyst caseload management and analyst quality are issues affecting Central, Northern, Southwest and Tidewater Regions of DDS.

- All the new strategies for claims adjudication being proposed by SSA would be fully funded by that agency and would not, therefore, impact the state agency's capital or financial plans.

- No plans for De-emphasis or Discontinuance of this agency – New regulatory changes will create a shift in the type of workforce within the DDS.

- FRS has many examples of mobile workers in the field. It is customary for counselors to spend large amounts of time at itinerary sites that may include One-Stops, schools, departments of health or social services, Community Services Boards and Clubhouses. Technology to support mobile workers is improving, but continues to be a challenge. We can expect more mobility in the future. Employees must have network access to be efficient in performing work in a variety of locations. The division will explore options and strategies to make telecommuting an option for those who can be as productive or more productive in alternate work sites.

- In the fall of 2003 a team of staff from the DRS Central Agency evaluated WWRC and provided a written report about the structure and effectiveness of the Center. A new Center Administrator, Dr. Richard S. Luck, was assigned to WWRC on August 1, 2003, to oversee the implementation of the Study Team's recommendations. As of the writing of this report the majority of those recommendations have been implemented. WWRC will finish the current fiscal year with a slight budget shortfall but will begin fy05 with a balanced budget for the first time in many years.

- Conduct issues are monitored through the WWRC HR Office but do not appear to be a cause for concern at the present time. There are no indicators that would suggest that an increase is anticipated. To the contrary, WWRC employees are performing at a "contributor or exceeds contributor level." There is no established pattern of employees performing below the contributor level.

TRAINING ISSUES

DDS

- Current Training Needs

    o Supervisory Training
      Including Interpersonal Skills for Unit Supervisors as they
      have to deal with lots of different personalities and they
      need to be able to communicate effectively with all their
      analysts.
    o Eview Training
    o Medicaid claims adjudication training
    o Individualized training for career advancement
    o Training in adapting to constant change
    o Caseload management in the Levy environment
    o Interviewing skills for supervisors
    o Software specific training (e.g. Word, Windows and Excel)

FRS

- Current Training Needs
    o New Counselor Skills Training
    o Vocational Evaluator's Training
    o Job Development and Job Placement
    o Conflict Resolution
    o Caseload Management
    o Core Skills Training
    o Critical Thinking Skills for Managers
    o Serving persons with head injuries
    o Disability specific training
    o Support Staff Training
    o Automation Training
    o Students in Transition
    o Safety in the Workplace
    o Leadership Skills
    o New Supervisor's Skills

WWRC

- Dr. Luck developed a Leadership Coalition that has completed an analysis of the operational environment and has determined that the primary training need is for "change management and leadership training."

- Wayne Heatwole, Director of the Office of Management Support at WWRC, who monitors training has identified that an initiative to support behavioral intervention, especially a train the trainer model, is needed.

DRS RECOGNITION PROGRAM

- In 2001 a committee was formed to develop a proposal for a employee recognition program for the Department of Rehabilitative Services. This workgroup was made up of employees representing the major functional areas within DRS and solicited input from all DRS employees in developing a proposal. Based on input from employees, a formal Employee Recognition Program was implemented in January 2002. A copy of the Employee Recognition Program Policy is included in our appendix.

- In 2002 awards totaling $10,515 were received by DRS employees. In 2003, $8,979.57 was spent on recognition awards during the first two quarters. Due to budgetary constraints, monetary awards were discontinued and recognition leave was awarded. Approximately 600 hours of recognition leave was awarded during the last two quarters of 2003.

- As a result of feedback from the Employee Recognition Team, beginning January 1, 2004, the number of awards allowed by our program increased to a maximum number of 268 awards allowed each year. This will provide more opportunity to recognize those employees making a difference in our agency.

III   ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS

DDS

- The only federal legislation that could have a possible effect on DDS operations would be the recently passed Medicare Act. It has not yet been fully interpreted, but the state agency must be aware that this could very well result in increases to their workloads as it could include that a disability decision be made on all applications for Medicare. An increase in claims for disability decisions would also result in the need for additional staffing.

- There are also some anticipated regulatory changes from SSA that will impact DDS operations. The Commissioner of SSA recently published her "Commissioner's Approach" to disability claim processing. This "approach" included the centralization of medical consulting (one national medical consulting group) which would impact the need for staffing local DDSs with state agency consultants. The approach also included the possibility of staffing the DDSs with nurses who would act as "local medical consultants". These changes could represent a shift in the type of workforce and could impact the professional status of analysts.

- SSA's proposed changes in claims processing will require a significant adjustment from a partially automated system to a totally electronic environment for the entire DDS staff. It will also require an adjustment in management skills for supervisors. Since there will be no paper records to reference, the new process will require that all medical review, adjudication and supervisory review be done in electronic format. Training in new skill sets will be arranged and conducted by a coordinated effort between SSA and DDS.

- DDS has already added 5 new IT positions during the past year. And the new claims processing strategy will, most likely, require additional staff in this area. Since IT personnel are considered by SSA to be part of DDS "overhead", the additional staffing will impact on SSA productivity indicators.

FRS

- Approximately 30% of current consumers are students in transition. Historically counselors became involved with students in their senior year of high school. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act encourages much earlier involvement and suggests that there is a role for the VR counselor as early as at age 14. The Rehabilitation Services Administration, our federal partner, places a high priority on serving students in transition and emphasizes the need for earlier involvement. As a result, school caseloads are growing and consumers are remaining on caseloads longer. This has an impact on the amount of manpower resource that must be devoted to school caseloads. If the emphasis on transition continues as it is expected to, demand for additional school counselors can be expected.

- A critical factor currently impacting the FRS Division is the lack of funding needed to serve all eligible consumers. Projections suggest a serious shortfall in funds for the FY05 VR budget year. Clearly we cannot operate as we have, serving the number of consumers we have with this significant shortfall. One immediate strategy to be employed July 1, 2004 is to enter Order of Selection. Federal law requires state VR programs to take this step whenever they anticipate that there will be insufficient funds to serve all eligible consumers. Order of Selection requires that the agency identify priority categories that are based on the significance of the disability and the functional limitations associated with the disability. The priority for service must be given to individuals with the most significant disabilities. This will be a radical step for service delivery staff as it will create a waiting list and will deny services to consumers who have been determined eligible.

- Under Order of Selection the program will downsize as consumers in closed categories must wait until funds are available to serve additional categories. Since the VR program will continue to serve cases in which an Employment Plan has been developed, expenditures will not decrease immediately. That leaves FRS with some difficult choices for living within a significantly reduced budget.

- Long-range challenges have to do with implementation of Workforce Investment Act programs and services. Consolidation of employment and training services under one authority remains a serious concern to the VR program. For certain, we will be called upon to increase support for local One-Stop service centers with personnel and infrastructure funding. This comes at a time when we can ill afford to divert VR funding which we already anticipate will be insufficient to support current programming.

- What is in store for VR program in the future? It is likely that there will be increased pressure to partner with public and private entities. Co-location and telecommuting will be considerations that will help to reduce administrative costs and offer options that will help to attract and retain workers. Demand for VR services is not likely to decrease. Funding is not likely to increase dramatically. FRS will continue to be confronted with the requirement to do more with less, to maintain program accessibility and to emphasize consumer choice in all service decisions. There will be a continued emphasis on partnerships and sharing of resources with community partners.

- Some employees will not meet the standards for qualified rehabilitation professionals by 2008. Retirement will be an option for some of these counselors and evaluators. Our challenge will be to find ways to engage valued employees in work that is productive and satisfying if we are to retain them. We have recently examined the responsibilities of placement counselors and have determined that these counselors do not perform the functions that are specifically required of a qualified rehabilitation professional. Additionally, 12 contract placement counselor positions have been filled successfully by individuals who do not necessarily meet the CSPD standards. We have revised the qualifications on the EWPs for placement counselors to allow some flexibility in hiring qualified applicants who may not meet the CSPD standards.

- FRS has an antiquated Client Information System. There are many user friendly features that could provide additional support to all field staff that are simply not available in the current VRIS system. Efforts are underway to evaluate bids for a replacement system. Once a proposal is accepted, there will be many months of design and testing before it will be rolled out. A massive training effort will be required. In the meanwhile, staff use a cumbersome system that is inefficient and difficult to learn and use.

IV   GAP ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLAN

GAP #1: Large percentage of workforce is eligible for retirement	
GOAL	Develop mechanisms through succession planning to ensure agency is able to continue providing quality services to its clients
RATIONALE	Throughout the agency, there are high percentages of employees who are eligible for retirement and significant impact is expected within several departments. Divisions must ensure that adequately trained employees are able to step into the retiring employees' positions without diminished quality of service or speed of delivery.
ACTION STEPS	**TRAINING & DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES** • Supervisory Training, including interpersonal skills for DDS unit supervisors • Eview Training for DDS • Medicaid claims adjudication training • Individualized training for career advancement • Training in adapting to constant change • Caseload management in the Levy Environment • Interviewing skills for supervisors • Software specific training (Word, Excel and Windows) • Provision of statewide meetings on office safety, preparing for medical crisis and general personal safety in the work setting. • Provision of Crisis Prevention Techniques to ensure experts for future training and development activities planned throughout the agency. • An analysis of the operational environment at WWRC has been completed and the primary training need has been identified as change management and leadership training. • Leadership skills training has been cultivated in the agency. Retirees in key leadership roles

ACTION STEPS (continued)	within the agency have been identified and the division is providing leadership skills training to talented employees. Developing leadership skills and providing opportunities for employees to practice those skills will prepare employees for upward mobility and will allow them to enhance performance in current roles. • Increase leadership skills by providing opportunities for leadership roles, especially in work groups and special projects. • Development of training programs for case consultants and those individuals in senior positions that will provide theory and practice for supervision, thereby offering skills to make supervisory promotions more attractive. • Utilize grant funds for training. • Core Skills Training • Critical Thinking Skills Training • Crosstraining for new duties and expanded growth to avoid gap in knowledge of agency and work performance • New counselor training and new analyst training • Mentorship and supervised leadership roles **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION** • Career ladders developed in DDS to ensure competency based advancement from trainee to journey to senior disability determination analyst. Potential for career ladders in FRS for trainee to counselor positions. • FRS has established relationships with several colleges and universities, most recently VCU, GWU and NSU, as well as providing paid and unpaid internships. These relationships have resulted in providing the agency with capable counselors to fill several agency VR counselors positions. • FRS is discussing options for hiring interns in a trainee status at reduced pay as one way to

ACTION STEPS (continued)	attract qualified candidates in hard to fill positions.
	• Expand work/life issues for attracting and retaining employees, thereby developing relationships to enhance longevity of employment
	• Encourage retiree continuation of employment to avoid "brain drain"; e.g., wage employment and delaying retirement until documentation of work duties
MEASURING/ MONITORING METHODS	• Review training activities conducted from 7/04 through 6/05 to determine if training proposed in action steps was completed
	• Compare number of employees attending training in FY 04-05 with those trained in FY 03-04
	• Determine number of employees who advanced in DDS as a result of career ladder
	• Review turnover statistics to determine whether workforce issues being addressed are successful
	• Develop and submit the five year in-service training grant application to RSA
	• Measure internship hires and development of FRS trainee compensation structure

GAP #2: Attracting and retaining qualified and certified employees	
STRATEGY	Evaluate current recruitment practices and retention methods to determine areas which need strengthening/revising
RATIONALE	In analyzing data related to workforce planning, information reflected difficulty attracting and recruiting applicants in positions such as Vocational Evaluators, Vocational Counselors and rehabilitation nursing. Turnover data, reflected a higher than Statewide average for resignations related to dissatisfaction or better opportunities.
ACTION STEPS	• Paid/unpaid internships to provide individuals

ACTION STEPS (continued)	an opportunity to experience working environment • DDS Career Ladder • Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) plans to work with monster.com in advertising positions to include publicizing benefits of working in Virginia • Expand Internet information for disability services agencies to highlight myriad occupational job categories utilized by disability services agencies • Expand Intranet to provide additional information to employees such as tips on interviewing • Continue to explore the possibility of tele-commuting for positions in agencies • Survey new employees during first year of employment to determine satisfaction with position and whether advertisement/recruitment process provided an accurate expectation of the duties of the position • Explore the addition of recruitment resources in our advertising process in an effort to attract applicants from under-represented groups as well an increase success in attracting applicants for "hard to fill" positions • Where applicable, establish internal skill set development to supplement official training and development in classroom environment • Provide cross-training opportunities for employees • Utilize employee recognition to publicize positive actions/behaviors of employees to their co-workers
MEASURING/ MONITORING METHODS	• Compare FY 04-05 turnover data to that of FY 03-04 • Review applicant tracking system reports to determine effectiveness of our recruitment

	resources • Evaluate survey results from new employees • Evaluate exit interview responses to determine whether there are any recurring issues impacting employees' decisions to leave agency • Existence of Intranet site for employees

GAP #3: Higher workloads, increased task complexity and decreased resources	
GOAL	Maintaining Quality and Level of Customer Service
RATIONALE	• Duties of FRS field managers and regional directors have changed and responsibilities have increased as a result of composition of hierarchical layers and reduction in clerical support • High turnover of contract support personnel in FRS-Northern Virginia has resulted in a recurring drain on existing support • Impact of Order of Selection - downsizing of VR program and effect on consumers • Increased support from VR program in areas of personnel and infrastructure funding will be needed due to one-stop service centers • Automation resulting in movement to a paperless work environment • Case complexity increase • Order of Selection may result in WWRC census increase and increase need from FRS
ACTION STEPS	• Develop and implement a marketing program for WWRC; provide staff with access to consultants for the development of a marketing initiative • Research programs offered by CommonHealth related to dealing with stress and change in the workplace and schedule appropriate programs

ACTION STEPS (continued)	• Remind employees, especially managers, of the availability of Employee Assistance Program - provides up to 4 free visits at no cost to employee
MEASURING/MONITORING METHODS	• Review WWRC's progress in marketing efforts to attract customers • Evaluate customer feedback to determine any improvement or deficient areas in comparing FY 03-04 to FY 04-05 • Review statistical information for employee turnover in agency

GAP #4: Managing change and transition	
GOAL	Managing competencies and behaviors with a changing workforce within an environment with diminishing resources
RATIONALE	• Changing workforce demographics • Resistance to change • Impact of Order of Selection • Increase in case complexity • Movement toward a paperless work environment
ACTION STEPS	• Share information with managers on differing generational work characteristics in new employees as compared to current veteran staff • Cross training • Conduct sessions on change and transition for managers at WWRC • Utilize grant funding (RSA training grant) to develop staff skills • Utilize small focus group process at WWRC to revise/regenerate Center Mission, Vision and Values • Continue to support skills for leadership program and associated leadership development activities

ACTION STEPS (continued)	• Manage employees' needs for alternate/flexible schedules
MEASURING/MONITORING METHODS	• Review manager feedback on change and transition sessions at WWRC • Survey WWRC employees to obtain feedback regarding change and management and impact of small focus group processes on WWRC operations • Continuation and expansion of like activities to support recruitment and retention workgroup

COMMUNICATION OF PLAN TO AGENCY EMPLOYEES

Employees commit to meeting goals when they feel invested in the process, and when they see commitment from senior management toward achieving those goals. In this respect, the Commissioner feels that it is imperative to communicate the plan to employees. We are considering a variety of communication options to provide employees the opportunity to respond to the plan, to ask questions, and to offer suggestions. Plans include dissemination of the workforce planning project by an agency-wide e-mail, the inclusion of an article specifically related to workforce planning in the agency newsletter, and the posting of the document on the agency intranet site. Other possibilities not yet explored but under consideration include discussion during regional manager meetings where managers may, in turn, discuss the information with their staff.

V   ON-GOING REVIEW

The Workforce Planning Team will meet in January 2005, six months after the implementation of the plan, to evaluate progress utilizing the measuring and monitoring methods contained in the plan. A progress report will be provided to the Commissioner for review no later than February 1, 2005.

The Workforce Planning Team members will determine at the January 2005 meeting whether more frequent progress reviews would be beneficial.

VI APPENDIX

Appendix A - Agency's Salary Administration Plan

Appendix B - Agency's Employee Recognition Policy

Appendix C – DDS Competency Based Advancement from Trainee to Journey to Senior Disability Determination Analyst

Appendix D – FRS Vocational Rehabilitation Skills and Competencies Checklist

Appendix E – Human Services Managers Checklist for New Counselors Training and Orientation

Appendix F – Counselor Managers Checklist for Vocational Evaluator Competencies Standards

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

SALARY ADMINISTRATION PLAN

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2003

X.   Appeal Process

XI.   EEO Statement

XII.   Communication Plan

XIII.   Authorization and Signature

Appendix A - List of Unit Heads and Division Directors
Appendix B – DRS Employee Recognition Policy
Appendix C - DRS Recognition Awards Criteria

I. *EFFECTIVE DATE*

The Effective Date for the Department of Rehabilitative Services Salary Administration Plan is July 1, 2003.

- The Salary Administration Plan will be reviewed each fiscal year and will remain in effect until the Department determines that changes or revisions are required based on changing organizational needs, policies, laws, or legislation.

II. AGENCY SALARY ADMINISTRATION PHILOSOPHY AND POLICIES

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT: IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES, THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES COLLABORATES WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO PROVIDE AND ADVOCATE FOR THE HIGHEST QUALITY SERVICES THAT EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO MAXIMIZE THEIR EMPLOYMENT, INDEPENDENCE AND FULL INCLUSION INTO SOCIETY.

The Commonwealth's *Compensation Philosophy* is to pay employees in a manner sufficient to support and develop a high performance workforce that provides quality service in a fiscally responsible manner to the citizens of Virginia. In accordance with that philosophy, the Department of Rehabilitative Services seeks to attract and retain competent employees to assure the successful accomplishment of the Department's mission. The Department seeks to maintain competitive salaries and to recognize outstanding job performance, *to the degree possible within existing fiscal resources,* for employees who consistently contribute to the successful accomplishment of the Department's mission in an exemplary manner.

The Department is committed to administering the Salary Administration Plan fairly and equitably. Salary actions will be based on merit, market data, and the Department's business needs and will not discriminate against any individual based on race, gender, national origin, religion, age, political affiliation, or disability.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department has decentralized portions of pay practice decisions to Department management. There is a shared ownership of the Salary Administration Plan between Department managers and Human Resource Services (HRS). This supports management flexibility in making pay decisions that address their unique

needs; reduces turnaround time; and enables human resource staff to concentrate on more global agency-wide compensation issues for jobs and employees who are critical to the Department.

Responsibility levels for pay practices is discussed in detail in Section VI. Compensation Process. Responsibility levels for other areas are outlined below.

Administration (Agency Head and Executive Management Team)
- Establish agency Salary Administration Philosophy
- Develop compensation priorities for the agency
- Assess salary priorities and departmental needs in developing and acting on pay practices
- Respond to employee appeals
- Provide feedback to employees on their performance
- Stay informed about compensation program

Managers (Division Directors)
- Provide employees information on compensation plan
- Administer compensation priorities for the agency
- Assess salary priorities and departmental needs in developing and acting on pay practices
- Monitor budgets for areas of responsibility
- Negotiate salaries with employees or applicants in accordance with Salary Administration Plan parameters
- Provide feedback to employees on their performance
- Respond to employee appeals
- Stay informed about compensation program

First-line Supervisors (Unit Heads)
- Monitor budget for area of responsibility
- Negotiate salaries with employees or applicants in accordance with Salary Administration Plan parameters

- Provide feedback to employees on their performance
- Encourage and coach employee career development
- Respond to employee appeals
- Stay informed about compensation program

Employees
- Seek career development opportunities
- Self development and application of new skills, competencies
- Stay informed about compensation program

Human Resource Services (Disability Services Agencies)
- Establish agency Salary Administration Philosophy
- Establish agency salary administration policies
- Provide managers and employees information on compensation plan
- Provide training to executives, managers, supervisors, and employees
- Assess salary priorities and departmental needs in developing and acting on pay practices
- Establish and allocate positions into proper role
- Review use of pay practices
- Respond to management and employee appeals
- Provide for program evaluation
- Review EEO impact of salary decisions, role allocations, and other decisions impacting pay or potential pay
- Stay informed about compensation program

IV. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Department uses a variety of recruitment markets based on the type of job. Local, regional, and national markets may all be used. For example, local and regional recruitment markets are typically used for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors; however, for those counselors who serve clients who are deaf, a national recruitment market is typically used since these positions are hard to fill.

The majority of salary dollars are targeted for mission critical, direct service, or highly technical, hard to fill positions.

The Department will use both the work title and role title when advertising for positions. For certain positions, the Department will post the work title only, if the work title is one that is well recognized by a particular profession, for

example, Occupational Therapist. The Department will advertise using the minimum of the pay band with the salary stated as negotiable, for example: "salary range begins at…" This provides more flexibility in hiring decisions. Management may include the entire pay range or part of the pay range based on budgetary issues, internal alignment, or salary reference data.

Managers will emphasize to candidates total compensation (salary and benefits) rather than just base salary.

V.   PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

In accordance with Department of Human Resource Management Policy 1.40, Performance Planning and Evaluation, and Policy 1.45, Probationary Period, the following procedures have been adopted.

The Employee Work Profile (EWP) has been customized to meet Department needs. It has been split into two forms for ease of use – 1) Work Description/Performance Plan and 2) Performance Evaluation. The following information was added to the Work Description/Performance Plan: the employee

name; the nature, frequency, and types of contacts the employee has; and the types of supervisory advice and guidance the employee receives and the actions/decisions the employee makes without prior approval. The "Agency/Departmental Objectives" were changed to "Evaluation Factors" with the following factors recommended: customer service, interpersonal relations, communications, attendance/punctuality, planning/analytical skills/decision making, adapting to change, and safety. Supervisors will use the factors most relevant to the employee's core responsibilities. These forms contain all the required information as specified in Policy 1.40.

Probationary Period

The Department will use the "Probationary Progress Review" form as developed by the Department of Human Resource Management. The Employee Work Profile **will not** be used to evaluate probationary employees regardless of their hire or rehire date.

- Performance Increases During the Probationary Period

If a probationary employee is rated as "Contributor" on their Probationary Progress Review form they will be eligible for performance increases as outlined below:

Hire or Rehire Date	Percentage Increase Based on Established Rate
October 25th – January 24th	100% of rate for "Contributor"
January 25th – April 24th	75% of rate for "Contributor"
April 25th – July 24th	50% of rate for "Contributor"
July 25th – October 24th	25% of rate for "Contributor"

- Extension of Probationary Period

The probationary period **will not be extended for performance reasons** beyond the normal probationary period of twelve months.

The probationary period **will be extended** beyond the normal probationary period of twelve months (but not to exceed a total of eighteen months) when an employee moves to a new position in the last six months of his/her probationary period. This includes employees who change positions within the Department or those who come from other state agencies and are still on probation.

The probationary period is automatically extended when employees are on any leave with or without pay for more than fourteen consecutive calendar days.

Performance Plans

The Work Description/Performance Plan EWP is given to new or transferred employees within thirty days of their employment. Within thirty days of the beginning of the new performance cycle, new Work Descriptions/Performance Plans will be presented to employees and submitted to Human Resource Services.

- Upward Feedback

  Employees are strongly encouraged to complete the Upward Feedback Form for Supervisors developed by the Department of Human Resource Management. This information will be used to determine the developmental needs of their supervisors. The form may be completed anonymously or signed by the employee and is then given to the employee's reviewer. The reviewer will compile the results of individual performance feedback forms for each supervisor. This summary information will be shared with the supervisor, as part of the discussion of the developmental portion of the EWP for the upcoming performance cycle.

  Individual feedback forms will not routinely be discussed with the supervisor; however, the supervisor who is the subject of these records, does have access to the individual forms if he/she specifically requests to see them. The individual Upward Feedback Forms for Supervisors will be retained in the Reviewer's management file for at least sixty days after compilation of data and may be destroyed after this time.

Documentation During the Performance Cycle

- Interim Evaluations

  Interim evaluations for probationary and non-probationary employees will not be required; however, managers are encouraged to used interim evaluations as they deem necessary. The "Interim Evaluation Form" developed by the Department of Human Resource Management will be used. This form should be retained in the supervisor's file.

- Documentation of Extraordinary or Substandard Performance

  The Department will use the "Acknowledgement of Extraordinary Contribution" and "Notice of Improvement Needed/Substandard Performance" forms as developed by the Department of Human Resource Management. The "Acknowledgement of Extraordinary Contribution" form will be submitted to Human Resource Services.

  The "Notice of Improvement Needed/Substandard Performance" form will be retained in the supervisor's file.

Conducting Performance Evaluations

- Employee Self-Assessment

  Employees will be encouraged to use the Employee Self-Assessment Form developed by the Department of Human Resource Management. If an employee does not choose to complete a self-assessment, written documentation, typically in the form of an e-mail, will be obtained from the employee stating that he/she does not choose to complete the self-assessment. Both the employee self-assessment and the documentation stating that an employee does not choose to complete the self-assessment will be retained by the supervisor.

- Reviewer

  The official reviewer is the supervisor of the employee's immediate supervisor. No additional levels of management beyond this will function as the reviewer.

- Written justification of ratings measures

  Supervisors will be required to provide written justification for each rating measure.

- Employees who have been absent during the performance cycle

  The Department will not reduce the amount of the performance increase for employees who have been absent for portions of the performance cycle.

- Appeals

  The Department will use the appeals process as developed by the Department of Human Resource Management.

Performance Increases

- Designation of sub-agencies or sub-units

  The Department will not designate either sub-agencies or sub-units.

- Distribution of Performance Increases

  The Department wants to reward and recognize performance by both "Contributors" and "Extraordinary Contributors." Within policy and funding guidelines, the Department plans to award at least 90% of the Statewide Average Salary Adjustment to the "Contributor" level.

VI.   COMPENSATION PROCESS

Department management and Human Resource Services share responsibility for the administration of the Salary Administration Plan. The Salary Administration Plan has decentralized standard, set percentage amounts for pay actions to management. Salary increases or decreases above or below the standards set will be reviewed and approved by Division Directors or the Agency

Head, and DRS Compensation staff.   Appendix A lists Unit Heads and Division Directors who have designated authority levels for pay practices.

For all Pay Actions, salaries must be verified, in some cases, references must be checked, and the action must be based on the thirteen pay factors listed below.   All thirteen pay factors must be considered when determining salary; however, not all have to be used.   No salaries will exceed the maximum of the pay band or be below the minimum of the pay band.

The Pay Action Worksheet (PAW) is used to document all pay actions and make payroll changes.   Non-pay related personnel actions such as requests to recruit, position establishments, or other non-pay related transactions will use the Personnel Action Request Form (PARF).

Pay Factors

Current Salary: The applicant's or incumbent's present base pay compensation, which may be reported as an hourly wage, weekly, semi-monthly, monthly, or annual salary. This salary amount does not include shift differentials, benefits, overtime, incentive premiums, bonuses, commissions, or other similar non-base-pay compensation. *NOTE:* If the applicant's salary is for less than twelve months; e.g., a teacher who works for nine months, then for comparison purposes, the salary should be converted to a twelve months salary.

Total Compensation: This includes all forms of cash compensation (e.g., base pay, shift differentials, overtime, on-call pay, bonuses, commissions, etc.) and the dollar value of the employer-sponsored benefits package (e.g., health and dental insurance, long and short term disability, paid leave, retirement, life insurance, etc.). *NOTE:* The greatest impact of total compensation will be on starting pay and competitive offers.

Salary Reference Data: A composite of relevant salary information (e.g., average salary range, median salary, weighted average salary, mid-point of salary range, etc.) extracted from available surveys that indicate market pricing for various jobs in the Commonwealth.

Internal Salary Alignment: A fairness criterion that takes into consideration the proximity of one employee's salary to the salaries of others who have comparable levels of training and experience; similar duties and responsibilities; each employee's performance; and similar knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies. Internal salary alignment is determined by the examination of an employee's salary in relation to comparable co-workers.

Budget Implications: The short and long term financial consequences of pay decisions and how salary dollars are managed by an agency.

Duties and Responsibilities: The primary and essential work functions performed by an employee or group of employees. Variation in these duties and responsibilities help distinguish one employee from another for comparison purposes.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Competencies: Elements commonly listed for job requirements, hiring qualifications, or employee credentials. Knowledge refers to acquired principles and practices related to a particular job (e.g., principles of accounting). Skills refer to acquired psychomotor behavior (e.g., operation of a forklift). Abilities are the talents, observable behavior, or acquired dexterity (e.g., ability to lift 50 pounds). Competencies are the knowledge, skills, and underlying behavior that correlate with successful job performance.

Work Experience and Education: The applicant's or incumbent's relevant employment history and academic qualifications.   Work experience is the employment history of an individual, and typically includes the titles of jobs held and a corresponding description of the duties, responsibilities, and tasks performed. Education is academic credentials obtained and is usually listed as high school diploma, associate degree, bachelor's degree, or specific advanced degree.

Performance: The applicant's or incumbent's previous and/or current work accomplishments or outcomes and behavioral interactions that are typically assessed in written, verbal, or observational forms. NOTE: All management-initiated salary increases are based on employees meeting an acceptable performance level (rated as "contributor" or higher).

Training, Certification, and License: Job requirements or employee qualifications that are relevant or highly desirable for a particular job. Training refers to a specialized course of instruction outside the realm of recognized academic degree programs (e.g., in-service training, etc.). Certification refers to a specialized course of study resulting in a certificate upon successful completion (e.g., CRC). A license is a credential that is usually required by law to practice one's occupation (e.g., registered nurse, physician).

Agency Business Needs: The specific activities and organizational, financial, and human resource requirements that are directly derived from the agency's

mission. For example, changes in an employee's duties, abilities, etc., should be relevant to the agency's business needs in order to be compensable.

Long-Term Impact: The strategic and financial effect of anticipated future salary costs, staffing changes, salary alignment among employees, career growth, and salary reference data changes.

Market Availability: The relative availability of suitable, qualified employees in the general labor market, which is subject to the effects of supply and demand. Consideration should be given to the agency's tolerance for variation in the applicant pool and its willingness to accept applicants with fewer qualifications in times of high market demand.

Pay Practices

Starting Pay

Definition: **Starting pay actions should consistently be aimed at attracting the most qualified applicants and paying them at a rate that is fair to the applicant, fiscally responsible, supports internal equity with existing staff, and is in line with relevant salary reference data.**

Approval Authority: Unit Heads may approve salary offers up to 10% of the applicant's current or prior salary or to the minimum of the pay band. Salary offers over 10% (unless the offer is to the minimum of the pay band) must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

Promotion

Definition: Competitive movement to a different position in a higher pay band.

Approval Authority: Unit Heads may approve salary offers up to 10% of the applicant's current salary or to the minimum of the pay band. Salary offers between 11% and 15% (unless the offer is to the minimum of the pay band) must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

Voluntary Transfer – Competitive

Definition: Movement to another position in the same or different role within the same pay band. A Competitive Voluntary Transfer means the job has been advertised, applications screened, and qualified applicants interviewed.

Approval Authority: Unit heads may approve a salary offer to maintain an employee's current salary or increase the salary up to 10% of the employee's current salary. Salary increases between 11% and 15% or a salary decrease must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

Voluntary Transfer – Non-Competitive

Definition: Movement to another position in the same or different role within the same pay band. A Non-Competitive Voluntary Transfer means the job was not advertised.

Approval Authority: The Commissioner will approve salary increases up to 10% of the employee's current salary or any salary decreases. Unit Heads may approve a salary offer to maintain an employee's current salary.

Voluntary Demotion

Definition: **Movement to a different role in a lower pay band, through either a competitive or non-competitive process.**

Approval Authority: Unit Heads may approve maintenance of the employee's current salary or if the employee's salary is over the maximum of the pay band, freezing it for six months. At the end of six months, the employee's salary will be reduced to the maximum of the lower pay band. A salary decrease must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

Temporary Pay

Definition: On a temporary basis, an employee assumes a different role in a higher pay band, assumes new duties in the same or different role in the same band, or assumes additional assignments associated with a special time-limited project.

Temporary pay may be awarded when the assumption of new duties in a higher pay band or same pay band, or duties associated with a time-limited project have been performed for thirty days. Temporary assignments should be no more than 180 days. At the end of 180 days the temporary duties are removed; however, if the

temporary assignment needs to continue beyond the 180 days an extension with additional documentation is submitted.   If it is determined that the temporary assignment will be permanent, a request for a role change review is submitted to HRS.   *NOTE:* When an employee changes to a different position the temporary pay is automatically removed. Any further pay action is based on the employee's base salary **not** the base salary and temporary pay.

Different role in a higher pay band – The Commissioner will approve salaries up to 15% of the employee's current salary, not to exceed the maximum of the higher pay band.

Same or different role in the same pay band – The Commissioner will approve salaries up to 10% above the employee's current salary, not to exceed the maximum of the pay band.

Special Assignment - The Commissioner will approve salaries up to 10% above the employee's current salary, not to exceed the maximum of the pay band.

Role Change

Definition: A non-competitive change in role to a higher, lower, or same pay band due to significant changes in responsibility and duties. Role changes will be submitted to HRS after approval for review has been received from the Commissioner's office. Human Resource Services will conduct an analysis to determine if the changes result in movement to a higher, lower, or same pay band.

***Upward Role Change* (change to a higher pay band) – After the analysis of the role change is completed by the assigned Compensation Consultant and movement to a higher pay band is authorized, the Unit Head may approve a salary increase up to 10% above the employee's current salary or to the minimum of the pay band.**

***Downward Role Change* (change to a lower pay band) - After the analysis of the role change is completed by the assigned Compensation Consultant and movement to a lower pay band is authorized, the employee's current salary will remain unchanged unless it exceeds the maximum of the lower pay band. If the employee's current salary exceeds the maximum of the lower pay band, it will be maintained for six months and then reduced to the maximum of the lower pay band.**

Lateral Role Change (remain in same pay band) – After the analysis of the role change is completed by the assigned Compensation Consultant, the Unit Head may approve a salary increase up to 5% above the employee's current salary. Salary increases between 6% and 10% must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

In-Band Adjustment

***Definition:* In-band adjustments allow agency management the flexibility to provide potential salary growth and allow employees career progression within a pay band. In-band adjustments may occur for the following reasons: a) change in duties; b) application of newly acquired job-related knowledge and skills obtained through education, certification, or licensure; c) retention; or d) internal alignment.**

In-band adjustments will be submitted to HRS after approval for review has been received from the Commissioner's office.

No employee may receive more than 10% per fiscal year for In-Band Adjustments. This 10% maximum also includes any salary increases that result from a lateral role change.

a) *Change in Duties* - Assumption of new or changed, higher level responsibilities; however, the additional duties or responsibilities do not warrant movement to a new role in a higher pay band.

Unit Heads may approve a salary increase up to 5% above the employee's current salary. Salary increases between 6% and 10% must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

***b) Application of new job-related knowledge or skills* - To encourage and reward employees for application of the knowledge and skills acquired through training, education, certification and/or licensure that benefit the agency.**

Unit Heads may approve a salary increase up to 5% above the employee's current salary. Salary increases between 6% and 10% must be approved by the Division Director or Agency Head and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

c) *Retention* – This pay practice is designed to prevent employees from seeking employment outside of the agency in occupations that have high visibility in the labor market when the employees' salaries may not be competitive with the marketplace. Typically salary adjustments are granted to all employees in the same occupation where the retention problem is occurring.

The **Agency Head** may approve salary increases up to 10% for affected employee(s) dependent on salary reference data, turnover data, etc.

d) *Internal Alignment* – The proximity of one employee's salary to other employees' salaries in the same agency who have comparable levels of training

and experience; similar duties and responsibilities; similar performance; and similar levels of expertise, competencies, and/or knowledge and skills.

The **Agency Head** may approve salary increases up to 10% for affected employee(s) dependent upon salary reference data, turnover data, and salaries of other employees in the unit.

Disciplinary or Performance-related Salary Action

Definition: **For disciplinary or performance-related reasons, an employee can be assigned to a Role in a lower pay band or remain in the same pay band with less responsibilities.**

Approval Authority: Unit Heads must consult with either the Human Resources Director or Employee Relations Consultant before taking this action. Once this is determined to be the appropriate action, a 5% reduction in salary will occur.

Competitive Salary Offer

Definition: Competitive salary offers can be made to employees who are deemed critical to the agency's mission and on-going operations. Competitive salary offers may be made for internal salary offers from another state agency or external salary offers for organizations outside of state government.

Approval Authority: For comparison purposes, supervisors are encouraged to contact the organization making the offer in order to obtain additional information on salary and benefits. The Division Director or Agency Head may approve a competitive salary offer after receiving a written employment offer from the internal or external organization and consultation with the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

Reassignment within the Pay Band

Definition: Agency business needs may require movement of staff. Reassignment within the pay band is a management-initiated action used for this purpose. Employees may be reassigned to the same or different role within the same pay band. The employee's base salary is not changed.

The Division Director or Agency Head approves this action and the Compensation Consultant assigned to the unit.

VII.   RECOGNITION AWARD PROCESS

The Department encourages all employees to fully participate in providing exceptional service to customers. The Department will recognize exemplary service through the use of an Employee Recognition Program consistent with the Department of Human Resource Management policy 1.20 Employee Recognition Programs. The Department's Employee Recognition Policy is located on Human Resource Services' Intranet site. The entire policy is included in Appendix B. The Employee Recognition Program has a Recognition Committee to facilitate the implementation of the program. The Committee has sixteen members representing designated areas of the agency. One member from Human Resource Services functions as an ex-officio member. The awards criteria is in Appendix C.

Classified, wage, and contract employees are eligible. Wage and contract employees are not eligible to receive leave.

VIII. WAGE EMPLOYEES

The Department will apply the pay practices, as outlined in the Salary Administration Plan, to wage employees. Performance increases or structure adjustments for wage employees will be handled in compliance with directions from the Department of Human Resource Management as outlined in their annual "Compensation Activities" memorandum from the Director, Office of Compensation and Policy.

IX. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Department of Rehabilitative Services' Compensation Management unit tracks and monitors all pay actions and will conduct annual reviews and post audits of these pay actions to determine patterns, trends, and compliance to policy; demographics; percentages given, and distributions of salary actions across the agency; EEO and fiscal impact. Results will be evaluated and discussed with agency management. If trends indicate an adverse impact or problem within any section of the agency, an action plan will be developed with management that may include additional training or fewer decentralized actions.

X. APPEAL PROCESS

The Department has no formal appeals process for compensation decisions. Employees or managers may appeal to the compensation consultant who approved the action. In addition, the state grievance process may be used if necessary. For agency appeals of DHRM actions, the Department will use the process outlined in Appendix D of Department of Human Resource Management's Human Resource Management Manual.

XI.   EEO STATEMENT

All salary adjustments will be based on legitimate reasons as detailed in the pay factors and must be unrelated to race, gender, national origin, age, religion, political affiliation, or disability.

XII. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The **Communication Plan** for the Department identifies all agency supervisors, managers, and approval authorities.   Training and communication of compensation issues is an on-going process. New supervisors and managers attend supervisory training that includes performance management and pay practices. Human Resource Services continues to update employees and managers through mass distribution of information memos via e-mail, presentations to agency management, and one-on-one consultation.

Human Resource Services' developed an Intranet site which provides all policies and related forms, with links to the Department of Human Resource Management's website.

All new employees of the Department receive information on the new pay structure as part of their orientation to the agency.

XIII. AUTHORIZATION AND SIGNATURE

_____
_____
James A. Rothrock, M.S., L.P.C., Commissioner DRS   Date

_____
_____

Maryann B. Belcher, Human Resources Director   **Date**

Appendix A

List of Unit Heads and Division Directors
For Salary Administration Plan

UNIT HEADS	AGENCY HEAD/DIVISION DIRECTOR
Position 00131, Chief Deputy (incumbent - Mary M. Cash) Functions as Division Director	James Rothrock
Position 01099, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent - Judith Smith) Functions as Division Director	James Rothrock
Position 00140, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Margaret Gillispie)	Judith Smith
Position 00015, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Douglas James)	Judith Smith
Position 00519, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Barbara Franklin)	Judith Smith
Position 00607, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – John Phelps)	Judith Smith
Position 00018, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent - Larry Overbay)	Judith Smith
Position 00606, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Jack Hayek)	James Rothrock
Position 00351, Audit Services Manager II (incumbent – Dale South)	James Rothrock
Position 00112, General Administration Manager III (incumbent – John Coffey) Functions as Division Director	James Rothrock
Position 00661, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Robert Watts) Functions as Division Director	James Rothrock

Appendix A

List of Unit Heads and Division Directors
For Salary Administration Plan

UNIT HEADS	AGENCY HEAD/DIVISION DIRECTOR
Position 00646, Financial Services Manager II (incumbent – Philip Benton)	John Coffey
Position 01007, Human Resource Manager II (incumbent – Maryann Belcher) Includes WWRC HR	John Coffey
Position W0375, Information Technology Manager II (incumbent – Ernest Steidle)	John Coffey
Position 00300, Policy and Planning Manager II (incumbent – Elizabeth Smith)	John Coffey
Position 01012, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Michael Snedegar)	Robert Watts
Position 01010, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Ed Gartner)	Robert Watts
Position 01009, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Mary Stone)	Robert Watts
Position 01011, Program Administration Manager III (incumbent – Sharon Gottovi)	Robert Watts

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION POLICY NO. 28 July, 2003

POLICY:

The Department of Rehabilitative Services encourages all employees to fully participate in providing exceptional service to our customers, thereby preserving the exemplary public service reputation established by DRS. DRS will recognize exemplary service through use of an Employee Recognition Program consistent with Department of Human Resource Management Policy.

PROCEDURES:

28.1 RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

   A Recognition Committee will be established to facilitate the implementation of the recognition program. The Recognition Committee will consist of 16 members, 15 members representing designated areas of the agency and 1 ex-officio member from the Human Resource Division. The designated areas of the agency and committee membership are:

Central Office	2 members
Field Rehabilitation Services	5 members - one from each region
Disability Determination Services	4 members - one from each region
Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center	4 members - from a variety of disciplines
Human Resource Division	1 ex-officio member

28.2 AWARDS

   28.2.1 In all cases the monetary awards may be replaced with the leave awards based on agency budgetary conditions. All awards, however, should be handled consistently during each calendar year unless an unforeseen emergency arises.

   Leave awards are only available for classified employees. Wage and contract employees, where identified, will receive monetary awards.

   28.2.2 Quarterly Awards

                  1.   NEW EMPLOYEE
                       Each new employee will receive a mug at
                       New Employee Orientation.

2. CUSTOMER FIRST AWARD

Criteria: Employee (classified, hourly or contract) receives an unsolicited complimentary letter from either an internal or an external customer for outstanding customer service or provides recognized outstanding customer service. Award recipients would be selected based upon information supplied on DRS Recognition Award Nomination Form with Supervisor or Manager's endorsement. The final decision will be made by Nomination Committee.

Limit: Ten Customer First Awards could be given per quarter in each area.

Presentation: Presented by Recipient's Manager via Staff Meeting or other departmental gathering. Member of Employee Recognition Committee would be present.

Award: Certificate and Recognition Leave of 4 hours or cash award of $25.00. In addition, appropriate acknowledgment in agency and office newsletters and bulletins.

3. S.T.A.R. AWARD (**S**ervices **T**hat **A**re **R**emarkable)

Criteria: Employee's (classified, hourly or contract) work performance goes above and beyond what is normally expected in their jobs, such as identifying and/or developing process improvements, initiating productivity enhancements or budget saving ideas. DRS Recognition Award Nomination Form would be submitted to Nomination Committee. Award recipients would be selected based upon information supplied on nomination form with Supervisor or Manager's endorsement. The final decision will be made by

Nomination Committee.

Limit: Four(4) Star Awards could be given per quarter in each area.

Presentation: Presented by recipient's manager via staff meeting or other departmental gathering. Member of Employee Recognition Committee would be present.

Award: Certificate with Recognition Leave of 16 hours or $100 cash award. In addition, appropriate acknowledgment in agency and office newsletters and bulletins.

4.   TEAM AWARD [**T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore]

Criteria: Teams participating in a project that has a positive impact on DRS, or work unit. Teams can consist of classified, hourly or contract personnel. The DRS Recognition Award Nomination Form would be submitted to Employee Recognition Committee. Award recipients would be selected based upon information supplied on nomination form with Supervisor or Manager's endorsement. The final decision will be made by Nomination Committee.

Limit: Two (2) team awards could be given per quarter in each area.

Presentation: Presented by recipient's manager via staff meeting or other departmental gathering. Member of Employee Recognition Committee would be present.

Award: Certificate for each team member with Recognition Leave of 8 hours or a cash award of $50 per person, not to exceed $500 per team. In addition, appropriate acknowledgment in agency and office newsletters and bulletins.

28.2 AWARDS

All nominations for the quarterly will be submitted on the DRS Recognition Award Nomination Form. Any other agency employee may make the nominations. The information on the form must clearly articulate why the employee is being recommended for the specific award. The DRS Recognition Award Nomination Form should then be sent to the nominee's supervisor for recommendation and comments. The completed form is then sent to the Nominating Committee.

DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES

Competency Based Advancement from Trainee to Journey to Senior Disability Determination Analyst

Competencies Required for Each Level of Analyst
The different levels of disability analyst are based upon increasing competencies in the adjudication of Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicaid disability claims. Movement from one level to the next cannot occur until the individual has demonstrated satisfactory performance for one quarter in the standards listed on page 2-4 for the types of claims adjudicated by analysts at his/her level. The following table gives a brief description of the responsibilities of each level of analyst.

TRAINEE ANALYST	JOURNEY ANALYST	SENIOR ANALYST
Adjudicates initial Title II (SSDI), Title XVI (SSI), and Medicaid adult disability claims	Adjudicates initial Title II (SSDI), Title XVI (SSI), and Medicaid adult claims; initial SSI and Medicaid child claims; and initial continuing disability review (CDR) claims	Adjudicates initial Title II (SSDI), Title XVI (SSI), and Medicaid adult claims; initial SSI and Medicaid child claims, and initial continuing disability review (CDR) claims

Adjudicates appeals (reconsiderations) of initial and CDR decisions made by Disability Determination Services to ensure decisions are correct and adequately documented for the next level of appeal to an SSA Administrative Law Judge or a Disability Hearing Officer

Prepares a written Appeals Summary and participates in Medicaid due process hearings to explain the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures followed in |

		making the DDS decision.
		Adjudicates complex, difficult, or error prone special workloads caused by court decisions, legislation, etc.
		Accepts additional claims beyond customary workload based on needs of the DDS
		Independently completes all forms for physician/psychologist signature needed in the adjudicatory process, to include mental and physical residual functional capacity assessments, psychiatric review technique forms, and childhood evaluation forms.

Mastery of Trainee Analyst Level Competencies
All newly hired DDS employees will be hired as Trainee Analysts, even those with previous experience as a disability analyst.

Trainees, including those with previous DDS experience, will be expected to successfully demonstrate mastery of the competencies listed below within 24 months of completing centralized training. Trainees will be evaluated quarterly. Any probationary employee who is not showing during their 12-month probationary period the expected developmental performance may be terminated based on State and Agency policy. Those Trainees not on probation who based on quarterly evaluations are not meeting the expected developmental performance may be handled in accordance with State Standards of Conduct policies.

Receipts and clearances of the claims types assigned to trainee analysts average no less than 173 per quarter.

Group I accuracy in decisions is not less than 92.7%. An increased quality assurance sample will be done during the quarter to provide a valid sample.

Mean processing time is not more than 66.1 days.

Accuracy in supervisory case reviews of caseload management skills is not less than 90%. Enhanced supervisory reviews will be done during the quarter.

Independence commensurate with expectations for trainee analysts with no prior DDS experience who have completed one year of training is demonstrated in completion of all forms used in adjudicating claims. An enhanced review by supervisor, case consultants, medical/psychological consultants, and/or quality assurance specialists will be done using the Independent Forms Completion Assessment attached.

(The Employee Work Profile for Trainee Analyst has a more detailed description of the performance expectations for this position.)

A trainee with previous DDS experience can begin to receive sufficient cases per week to demonstrate mastery of trainee level competencies as soon as the supervisor deems this appropriate. A trainee without DDS experience generally undergoes intensive training for up to two years with gradually increasing case assignments and will not be assigned 15 cases per week until the supervisor deems this appropriate. This generally occurs approximately two years post completion of centralized analyst training, but exceptional performers may be able to advance more rapidly.

A trainee analyst will be given daily on the job group and individual training to assist him/her in mastering all competencies necessary for satisfactory work performance. Trainee analysts are expected to master the trainee level competencies no later than 24 months post centralized training. Failure to satisfactorily master these competencies by 24 months post centralized training would require the supervisor to develop a work plan designed to assist the employee in successfully meeting performance expectations and outlining consequences should performance not improve. Supervisory discretion will determine if and when a work plan becomes appropriate for an analyst with previous DDS experience whose progress is unsatisfactory. Trainees may not remain a trainee for more than 24 months post centralized training without implementation of a work plan designed to assist the employee in improving his/her work performance and reduce the chances of

disciplinary action. Exceptions may be made commensurate with time out if the employee has an approved extended absence during the 24 months.

Mastery of Journey Analyst Level Competencies
A journey analyst may remain a journey analyst as long as performance standards for the position are satisfactorily met. Journey analysts may well be given additional training to improve work performance, but they do not have the option of returning to a trainee analyst position.
There is no requirement to advance to Senior level analyst. All analysts currently employed by DDS, except for trainees, will be considered journey level analysts. Any current journey analyst who has not been trained in the adjudication of all claim types or other competencies required of journey analyst must promptly be provided training in these areas.

A 2.5% pay increase will be awarded to current journey analysts upon successful demonstration of these competencies for one quarter:

> Receipts and clearances of the claims types assigned to journey analysts average no less than 173 per quarter.

> Group I accuracy in decisions is not less than 92.7%. An increased quality assurance sample will be done during the quarter to provide a valid sample.

> Mean processing time is not more than 66.1 days for initial claims.

> Accuracy in supervisory case reviews of caseload management skills is not less than 90%. Enhanced supervisory reviews will be done during the quarter.

> Independence commensurate with expectations for Journey Analysts is demonstrated in completion of all forms used in adjudicating claims. An enhanced review by supervisor, case consultants, medical/psychological consultants, and/or quality assurance specialists will be done using the Independent   Forms Completion Assessment attached.

> (The Employee Work Profile for Journey Analyst has a more detailed description of the performance expectations for this position.)

Mastery of Senior Analyst Level Competencies

A journey analyst may remain a journey analyst as long as performance standards for the position are satisfactorily met. Should he or she desire to master the competencies necessary to become a Senior level analyst, he/she must indicate to the supervisor the desire to become a senior analyst. The supervisor will make clear the increased expertise and greater range of responsibilities and competencies required of Senior Analysts and arrange any training or increase in case receipts needed in the claims types or other competencies required of Senior Analysts. The Journey Analyst will be able to advance to Senior Analyst and receive a 2.5% pay increase after demonstrating for one quarter:

> Receipts and Clearances of the claims types assigned to senior analysts average 15 or more per week.

> Group I accuracy in decisions is not less than 92.7%. An increased quality assurance sample will be done during the quarter to provide a valid sample.

> Mean processing time is not more than 66.1 days for initial claims and 39.4 days for reconsideration claims.

> Accuracy in supervisory case reviews of caseload management skills is not less than 90%. Enhanced supervisory reviews will be done during the quarter.

> Independence commensurate with expectations for Senior Analysts is demonstrated in completion of all forms used in adjudicating claims. An enhanced review by supervisor, case consultants, medical/psychological consultants, and/or quality assurance specialists will be done using the Independent   Forms Completion Assessment attached.

> Appeals Summaries are clearly and concisely written, fully explaining the actions taken by DDS and the policies, regulations, and laws followed. Participation in hearings is professional and the actions of DDS are clearly explained to all participants. Supervisory reviews of Appeals Summaries and monitoring of hearings will be used to evaluate mastery of this competency.

(The Employee Work Profile for Senior Analyst has a more detailed description of the performance expectations for this position.)

Satisfactory performance as a Senior Analyst is necessary to remain in that position. Employees who initially demonstrated the ability to satisfactorily perform the duties of a Senior Analyst, but do not then continue to meet the expectations for Senior Analysts will have the option of returning to a Journey Analyst position with the appropriate salary decrease. An employee who is returned to a Journey Analyst level is expected to satisfactorily meet the expectations of the position. Failure to satisfactorily perform in the Journey position would require the supervisor to develop a work plan designed to enable the employee to meet performance expectations and outlining consequences should performance not improve. Journey analysts may well be given additional training to improve work performance, but they do not have the option of returning to a trainee analyst position.

In-Band Adjustment for Application of New Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
The Unit Supervisor of the employee who has successfully demonstrated mastery of the competencies of a particular level of analyst will complete the appropriate Journey Analyst or Senior Analyst Competency Inventory Form (see attached) for Human Resources. The employee must meet all the competency levels listed. The form will be signed by the Unit Supervisor. The Competency Inventory Form will be attached to a completed page one of the Pay Action Worksheet (PAW) (which must be signed by the Unit Supervisor, the Regional Director, and the DDS Division Director.) The pay action to be used is: In-Band Adjustment for Application of New Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities. The DDS Division Director has determined that the appropriate salary increase for this action is 2.5%. A packet for each affected employee should contain: a completed and signed page 1 of the Pay Action Worksheet with the Competency Inventory Attached and a signed and updated EWP for the new position.

NEW COUNSELOR SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES CHECKLIST

The New Counselors Skills and Competencies checklist was developed to assist human services managers ensure Field Rehabilitation Services counselors possess a specific level of knowledge, skills and abilities as they begin their careers with the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS). To assist the managers in development of the requisite skills and competencies, formal training programs such as New Counselor Skills Training (NCST), Job Development and Job Placement Training, Caseload Management Training, Conflict Resolution Training and Computer Training are available. Additional training and mentoring occurs in locally structured formats.

The New Counselor Skills Checklist is an inventory of skills acquired in formal classroom settings, in on-the-job training or through direct supervisory contact. Critical information for new employees, including history and theory, is found in the literature provided to the new counselors during the initial orientation.

Managers should use the checklist during the prior approval period to guide new counselors in their training and development efforts. Managers and the counselor should sign and date the checklist once all skills and competencies are mastered. This checklist, submitted to Human Resources through the Regional Director, in combination with the Pay Action Worksheet, will signal that the employee is qualified to become a Senior Counselor and is eligible for an in-band adjustment.

New Counselor Skills Training

Program Purpose: The New Counselor Skills Training incorporates the core areas of knowledge essential for beginning a counseling career with the Department of Rehabilitative Services. There is a strong emphasis on consumer directed job placement activities. Counselors are exposed to consumer-focused case management skills. This is accomplished by keeping the consumer's objective(s) as the basis for our services throughout the process. The recurring themes throughout all modules includes the utilization of a consumer-driven approach to case and caseload management, collaboration, effective planning, consumer inclusion, resource utilization, and job placement. Job placement related activities are the key focus of this training activity. Participants will also learn about Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) and the many services available.

Job Development and Job Placement

Program Purpose: This training provides information to help participants understand the dynamics of job development and job placement. It focuses on empowering consumers to take the lead in securing employment. Participants will learn basic tools necessary to promote this empowerment. A series of activities including role-plays directed job search activities and meeting with employers to define best strategies for successful employment outcomes are included.

Caseload Management

Program Purpose: This training provides counselors opportunities to increase overall consumer employment outcomes by learning more effective caseload management practices. The focus on effective caseload management tools promotes greater consumer involvement and enhances the planning process for Field Rehabilitation Services staff. Staff learn effective time management strategies, greater fiscal responsibility, practice using their caseload management tools and how to better monitor and manage case flow.

Conflict Resolution

Program Purpose: The training provides agency front-line staff with effective ways to deal directly with conflict arising in the vocational rehabilitation process. Focusing specifically on conflict in the consumer/provider relationship, participants explore techniques to defuse conflict-provoking situations and examine personal approaches to conflict. Emphasis is placed on effective listening skills as the key to preventing and resolving conflict. Staff learn to understand the nature of conflict, their reaction to it, and how conflict impacts the provider-consumer relationship. Participants learn strategies that reduce or prevent conflict, learn conflict resolution and problem solving skills and strategies and learn to recognize when a third party is needed to facilitate resolution.

Computer Training Skills

Program Purpose: To develop counselor's skills and understanding of the agency's standard computer applications including but not limited to the Virginia Rehabilitation Information System (VRIS), and agency-approved versions of Microsoft Windows (operating system and file management), MS Word (word processing), MS Outlook (email and information management) and MS Explorer (Internet/Intranet). Regional training classes are available for all staff and new counselors are encouraged to consult with their supervisor and training coordinator to register for the classes that meet the new counselor's needs and level of competency. Training on these and other computer applications can be received at the office level with persons designated to do such training. Computer Based Training CD's (CBT's) and self-paced learning textbooks are available in the local office for this purpose to learn Microsoft Applications. On-line reference manuals (Policy Manual and VRIS on-line training manual) are available for VRIS training. Refer to the checklist attached for a minimum set of computer-related competencies, which should be mastered.

Implementation Procedures

Much of the information, including history and theory, is found in the literature provided to the new counselors during the initial orientation. The following literature is made available to them during the two-week orientation.

- Foundations of the Vocational Rehabilitation Process
- Disability Handbook
- The Job Placement ADA Connection
- Case Management and Rehabilitation Counseling: Procedures and Techniques

Space has been left at the end of the form for managers to add any specific skills or competencies necessary for the individual counselor. Managers should use the checklist during the first year of employment to guide new counselors in their training and development efforts. Managers may wish to sign and date the checklist and place it in the counselor's file.

HUMAN SERVICES MANAGERS CHECKLIST

NEW COUNSELORS TRAINING AND ORIENTATION
LEADING TO BASIC SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

INTRODUCTION TO EMPLOYMENT IN DRS *(Complete prior to first NCST session)*

( ) *General information for all staff*
( ) *Orientation to state employment*
( ) *History and philosophy of Vocational Rehabilitation*
( ) *Staff roles in rehabilitation process – flow chart*
      -Local office (Mentoring)
      -Regional office
      -Central office
 ( ) *Training and staff development opportunities*
( ) *Travel regulations*

OVERVIEW OF DRS *(Complete prior to first NCST session)*

( ) *Process and purpose of DRS services*
( ) *DRS in partnership with community agencies*
     -Networking

( ) Confidentiality

( ) *Appeals process*
( ) *Forms, manuals, statuses and DRS resources*
( ) *Resources of vocational rehabilitation*
     -Statewide
     -Community
     -WWRC

INITIAL INTAKE, AND DIAGNOSTIC ACTIVITIES

( ) The referral process (00)
( ) Developing partnerships with community agency referral sources, e.g. WIA and One-Stop Employment Centers
( ) Initial interview (02)

( ) Completion of intake forms

( ) Consumer Choice, Rights and Responsibilities, Confidentiality

( ) Referral for assessments and/or diagnostics

( ) Think job placement from intake

( ) Case closure 00-08, 02-08

Prior to coming counselors should have:
- *Job shadowing with seasoned counselors.*
- *Completed at least 5 independent intakes (02) to include completing RS-3, 3i, 3e, 3j, general medical, RS-13, RS-5a, RS-4O, voter registration, social security verification. Be familiar with RS 457.*
- *Participated in 1 or more introductory group orientation programs, if available.*
- *Completion of at least 1 closure. Status 00 to 08, 02 to 08.*
- *Visit the regional vocational evaluation unit in order to understand what is involved in referring an individual for a diagnostic evaluation.*
- *Be familiar with Policies and Procedures Manual, S/I Manual, other Intranet resources.*
- *Visit the (a) local One Stop Employment Center.*
- *Visit/meet with a local vendor and community resource that serves your office.*

ELIGIBILITY

( )   Understanding what is included in a thorough diagnostic study
( )   Criteria for eligibility (10)
( )   Documentation of disability
       -Expediting documentation to be in compliance with 60 day limit
       -SSI/SSDI
       -Disabilities with specific documentation requirements
       -Use of counselor observation to document disability
( )   Defining and identifying functional limitations and significant disability
( )   Documenting the impediment to employment
( )   Conducting an extended evaluation (06)
( )   Providing consumer with Information on Development of the Employment Plan

Prior to coming counselors should have:

- *Knowledge of what documentation is required for establishing eligibility (interpretation of diagnostics/vocational implications).*
- *Knowledge of eligibility criteria.*
- *Be familiar how to use the policy manual with specific emphasis on Chapter 3.*
- *Become familiar with the Service Reference and Training and Facilities Manuals.*
- *Written independently or in collaboration with others a minimum of 5 certificates of eligibility.*

IPE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

( )   Evaluating case facts for effective plan development
( )   IPE planning including vocational goal and consumer informed choice (12)
( )   Determining customer's level of financial participation
( )   Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center
       -WWRC admissions policy & application procedure
       -Appropriate use of WWRC
       -Informed consent & vendor choice
       -Confidentiality & release of information
       -Discharge planning
( )   Case Closure 12-30
( )   Counseling and guidance (14)
( )   Physical Restoration Services (16)
( )   Training (18)
( )   Rehabilitation Engineering and Technology
( )   Interruption of Services (24)

( ) Case Transfer (31/33)
( ) Case Closure 14/16/18-28, 24-28

Prior to coming counselors should have:

- *Knowledge of actions one might be taking to help a client determine a reasonable vocational goal.*
- *Knowledge of financial participation for developing their Employment Plan*
- *An understanding of informed choice in developing the Employment Plan*
- *In collaboration with the customer, write a minimum of 3 Employment Plans.*
- *To have reviewed cases to include physical restoration, training, counseling and guidance, Supported Employment, and utilization of WWRC.*
- *Understand the employment plan implementation, monitoring and review process.*
- *Understand the purpose of amendments, substantial and minor, e.g. deletion of services, decrease or increase customer's financial participation, change in vocational goal, extension of service or new service, change in progress measure.*
- *Attend at least one networking meeting in your local area.*
- *Job shadow a supported employment job coach*
- *Meet with a training vendor to better understand vendor roles & responsibilities.*

JOB PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

( ) Agency marketing efforts
( ) Employment resource centers
( ) Marketing resources and tools
  -Displays
  -Handouts
  -Presentations and Modules
( ) Understanding basic ADA
  -Employment Regulations
  -Reasonable Accommodations
( ) Roles and responsibilities in placement (20,22)
  -Customer
  -Counselor
  -Manager
  -Community resources
  -WWRC
  -Virginia Employment Commission
  -Employer
  -Other
( ) Employer/Placement Incentives
  -Work Opportunities Tax Credit, Virginia Tax Credit
  -Social Security, IRE
  -OJT
  -Unpaid Work Experience
( ) Understanding local business culture
( ) Case Closure 20/22-26
  -90-day follow-up
( ) Post Employment Services

Prior to coming counselors should have:

- *A working knowledge of local and regional placement resources.*
- *Schedule with the PSTS a tour of the local Employment Resource Center.*
- *Call regional marketing coordinator.*
- *Review the manual to understand closure procedures.*

CASELOAD MANAGEMENT

( )   Organizing and managing the caseload
> -Involving the customer/family members advocates
> -Keeping an employment focus
> -Addressing stalled cases – move them or close them

( )   Time management/organization
> -Identifying, prioritizing, and planning client services
> -Scheduling itinerary stops, office time, phone calls, mail, and VRIS
> -Paperwork/documentation/VRIS
> -Time wasters

( )   Fiscal management
> -Case service budget projecting
> -Authorization aging report

( )   Caseload management tools
> -Calendars
> -Outlook
> -Caseload Management Report
> -Review Date Report
> -Client by Caseload Report
> -Pending Follow-up Contacts Report
> -Status 02 Report

( )   Monitoring and Managing Case Flow
> -Using Caseload Analysis to prioritize actions

STANDARDS OF CASEWORK PERFORMANCE AS RELATED TO COUNSELOR/SUPERVISOR ACTIVITIES

( )   Individual performance expectations
( )   Office expectations
( )   Computer skills expectations
( )   Monthly reports to supervisors

STANDARDS FOR COUNSELOR PERFORMANCE
( )   Ethics and confidentiality
( )   Staff/customer boundaries
( )   Effective decision making

VRIS AND COMPUTER SKILLS TRAINING

Use of the VRIS System

<u>Prerequisites:</u>

Successful use of the VR system requires ability to log onto the HP3000 using our Wide Area Network and also an understanding of data entry codes and requirements that are specified in related documentation. Therefore, before using VRIS the following prerequisites apply:

( ) Basic understanding of the use of the personal computer and peripheral equipment such as printers, scanners, etc., and any adaptive equipment which may be assigned to the individual.

( ) Demonstrated competency logging onto and using a LAN/WAN.

( ) Basic understanding of MS Windows 95/98, how to start a program and launch Reflections.

( ) Access and use of the Intranet Policy Manual (see Intranet checklist below) for instructions regarding codes and data entry for VRIS.

( ) Alternate: access to up-to-date paper equivalent of the Policy Manual.

( ) Access and use of the Services Reference Manual (see Intranet checklist below) for codes and qualifying service information for VRIS data entry

( ) Alternate: access to up-to-date paper equivalent of the Services Manual.

( ) Access and use of paper forms and electronic forms used for VRIS data entry

VRIS Client Services Module

Demonstrated competency using the following:

( ) Logging onto the VRIS production database (requires VRIS user ID and password)

( ) Navigation of the VRIS menu system

( ) Inquiry screens to access case management information, in particular,

( ) Client/Case inquiry to view all data on an individual client

( ) Clients By Caseload inquiry to view a full listing of caseload sorted by current status

( ) Selected screen reports for case management information, in particular

( ) ability to run a Status 02 report on screen

( ) Print reports for case management information

( ) Screen Print command for hard copy documentation

( ) Copy|Paste commands to use VRIS information to the word processor (also see checklist for

MS Word)

( ) Data entry screen for intake (Referral & Application screens)

( ) Data entry screen for diagnostic planned services prior to Employment Plan

( ) Data entry screen for Eligibility

( ) Data entry screen for Employment Plan using Laser Print command

( ) Review Dates Screen

( ) Planned Services Entry including entry for Comparable Benefits

( ) Printing Employment Plan Page 1 and Planned Services to laser printer

( ) Laser Print Command & use of print selection screen

( ) Plan Entry screen to enter Extended Evaluation

( ) Plan Entry screen to enter Amendments to the Employment Plan

( ) Data entry for Status Changes

( ) Data entry for unsuccessful closure prior to 26

( ) Data entry for 26 Closure

( ) Data entry for 90 Day Follow-up

VRIS Authorizations Module

( ) VRIS data entry for Single Authorization to Vendor

( ) VRIS data entry for Multiple-line Authorization to same Vendor

( ) Printing Authorizations in batch

( ) Printing of single authorizations on demand

( ) Inquiry and Reports for Authorizations

( ) Maintenance of outstanding authorizations upon closure

Computer Skills Training

Identification of Help & Training Resources
( ) Identification of office Super User(s) for local office assistance regarding computer skills & training
( ) Ability to find Computer Skills Training web site (http://intranet/dsa/training/cst.html) for
     training calendars, forms, etc.
( ) Identification of Help Desk telephone number and e-mail address to report and resolve problems.
( ) Identification of PC support staff (BOA) serving the local office

Network, MS Windows and File Management (Required):

Counselor must show at least basic competency with the operating system and file management. Must
have basic understanding of:

( ) The function of the Local Area Network (office server) and Wide Area Network (Intranet/Internet,
     VRIS)

( ) Windows 95
( ) Intro. to use of File Manager and File Management Protocols
        ( ) can find and use My Documents folder on C:\ drive
        ( ) can find and use personal folder on H:\ drive
        ( ) can find and use shared folders on K:\ drive
        ( ) demonstrates ability to create folders and save files to folders
        ( ) demonstrates ability to move files to folders
        ( ) demonstrates ability to copy files to folders

MS Word, Level I (Required):

Substantial case documentation is completed using word processing for case narratives, letters, forms, and other tasks. Counselors should be competent to use the agency standard word processor to compete these tasks.

Pre-requisites

( ) Keyboarding Skills: typing at sufficient speed and accuracy

( ) Adaptive requirements, if needed (dictation program, special keyboarding or other workstation adaptations attended to)

Basic word processing skills: Demonstrated competency with the following
( ) typing on the blank page (normal.dot) using word-wrap, creation of paragraphs, moving

around with mouse and arrow keys, page-up page-down, home, end, scroll bars.

( ) Basic View commands: page layout and Zoom display options
( ) Setting page margins & orientation
( ) Basic Insertion commands: Insert Date/Time, page break, page numbers
( ) Basic-formatting commands: font, paragraph, tabs
( ) Basic tools: Spell Checker, Thesaurus, and AutoCorrect
( ) Highlighting techniques with mouse and keyboard
( ) Basic-editing commands: Copy, Cut, Paste, Undo
( ) Use of basic fill-in forms (Word protected forms)
( ) Basic print command and print preview
( ) Use of on-line Help
( ) Use of standard and formatting toolbar shortcuts

Basic File Management; understanding and demonstrated competency with:
( ) File|Open Command for retrieving existing files
( ) File|New Command for using Word Templates
( ) Intro to difference between Word 6.0 Templates and Files
( ) File|Save As command for naming and saving files
( ) Creation of folder for customer files using the File|Save As dialog box
( ) Protocol for naming and using Client Directories
( ) Protocol for naming and saving client files
( ) Protocol for backing up files
( ) Orientation to and use of basic files and templates provided by local office
( ) Orientation to hard copy requirements (printing and filing) by office staff
( ) Able to identify Super User/Mentor for help in counselor's office

MS Word, Level II (recommended):

To make the most productive use of automated features of VRIS and MS Word for client documentation and processing requirements, the following abilities are needed:

( ) File management and backup strategies

( ) Create and Use AutoText entries

( ) Highlighting techniques and Quick Menu (right mouse button)

( ) Work with multiple files simultaneously

( ) Work with multiple applications simultaneously: File Manager, Word, VRIS

( ) Copying information from a VRIS screen to a Word document

( ) Create and use Tables, including calculation of a column of numbers, auto format, and wizards

( ) Extended Edit|Undo and Re-do

( ) Un-protecting/re-protecting a fill-in form to customize or use

( ) Intermediate formatting features: bullets and numbering, headers/footers

( ) Extended printing and previewing commands

( ) Extended Zoom commands

( ) Use of the ruler for tabs, indents, and margins

( ) Template and file management on a network

MS Word, Level III (Optional):

Level III objectives vary depending on the participants' level of competency and job requirements. Some of the objectives include:

( ) Creating, modifying, and correcting protected forms

( ) Correcting and modifying tables, and table design

( ) Using Macros for automated commands and automated processing

( ) Mail Merge for labels and form letters

( ) Extended use of right mouse button

( ) Extended use of VRIS and W60 simultaneously

( ) Use of Word and the Internet/Intranet

Forms & Templates: MS Word files provided with instructions for use
( ) Appointment & Contact Letters
( ) Vocational Diagnostic Interview
( ) Field Notes, Continuation Sheet
( ) Referral/Application including Interview outline(s)
( ) Application for VR Services (client signature form)
( ) Referral forms for evaluation, medical information, etc., and cover letters
( ) Certificate of Eligibility
( ) WWRC Referral & WWRC Application
( ) IWRP for Vocational Rehabilitation Services (for VRIS Laser Print)

( ) IWRP for Extended Evaluation (VRIS Laser Print program)

( ) Worksheet for Substantial Amendments to the IWRP
( ) DRS Intermediate Objectives
( ) New Intermediate Objectives
( ) Closure Form

MS Outlook E-Mail (REQUIRED)

Email: Minimum Competencies (Required)
The agency maintains conducts a substantial amount of communications using electronic mail with MS Outlook as the standard mail system. As a minimum, new counselors should be able to demonstrate ability to:
( ) Read email
( ) Read attached files that are sent with messages
( ) Reply to a message
( ) Forward a message using addresses in the Global Address Book (GAL)
( ) Create & send a new message using Global Address Book (GAL)
( ) Attach a file using the Insert command or using the File|Send To… command in Word.
( ) Delete messages
( ) View properties for individuals using the address book, address lists, and

In addition to the above required e-mail skills, the counselor may, depending on their job requirements, demonstrate ability to:
( ) Create a mail folder to organize and archive messages for recall
( ) Create Internet addresses using Personal Address Book (Outlook 98) or Contacts (Outlook 2000)
( ) Create and use personal distribution lists
( ) Use addresses to produce labels, form letters, and mail merges

Outlook Personal Information Management (PIM) Applications (Calendar, Contacts, Tasks)
Personal information management (PIM) can be utilized to increase caseload productivity. The local field office may also utilize these tools as shared resources under Public Folders. It is recommended that counselors use these tools in a way that meets the local office requirements and their own case management needs.

Calendar: Outlook's online calendar may be used to organize time required for appointments and projects.

At the basic level counselor may demonstrate ability to
( ) Create appointments and time blocks
( ) Access the appointment window to set start and end times, reminders, messages, and attachments
( ) View calendar as daily, work week, 7-day week, and month
( ) Print calendar in desired format
( ) Access any public calendars used by the field office, if any.

In addition to the basic skills and dependent on the counselor's job requirements, he or she may also demonstrate ability to:
( ) Manage appointments and meetings using the calendar "Invite Others" capabilities
( ) Create recurring appointments
( ) Attach files and messages in the appointment window
( ) Customize calendar printout
( ) Create monthly calendar using Word macro for word wrap

Contacts: Outlook provides a powerful "electronic rolodex" database to keep track of important contacts for use with e-mail, form letters and labels, searching the Internet and even maps and directions.

At the basic level the counselor may demonstrate ability to:
( ) Create contact with basic address, telephone number(s) and email(s)
( ) Use contact to send e-mail (ability to locate contact in the address lists

In addition to the basic skills and dependent on job requirements, the counselor may demonstrate ability to:
( ) Use contact list to generate a form letter
( ) Use contact to map an address & get driving directions
( ) Attach files to contact record
( ) Use contact database as a mail merge
( ) Use contact to manage meetings
( ) Use contact to set up distribution lists
( ) Use the Journal feature to keep a running journal of word documents, emails, appointments, tasks, and contact notes.

Tasks: Outlook provides a way to manage projects with its task management system.

At the basic level, the counselor may demonstrate ability to:
( ) Create an entry in the task list and in the Calendar view.
( ) View the task list in the Calendar view
( ) Print the task list in the desired format
( ) Mark a task as complete

In addition to the basic skills, counselor may also demonstrate ability to:
( ) Use task window to modify task & set reminders & attach related files and messages
( ) Assign tasks to others in their work group
( ) Set recurring tasks
( ) Customize the task view
( ) Create and use Categories to group related tasks & projects

Intranet/Internet
The agency maintains its own web services for internal and external tools and searches standardized on Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0 or above. The ability of the counselor to find and utilize required resources is essential to productivity

Intranet Policy Manual

Counselor must demonstrate basic ability to:
( ) Launch the Policy Manual using Internet Explorer
( ) Use the Topic Contents links to view chapter headings and sub-headings
( ) Use the Index to search for web pages that contain keywords within the manual
( ) Use the Search link to freely search the manual for keywords entered by the user
( ) Use Explorer's "Find On This Page" command to find where key words are located on the web page
( ) Use the Downloads link to copy chapters of the manual if needed for remote or offline use
( ) Ability to print only the section of the manual needed by highlighting text and executing the File|Print|Selection command. Note: This is an ESSENTIAL skill if counselor is going to print sections of the manual.
( ) Ability to identify and use links within the manual to other resources such as state and federal regulations.
( ) Ability to identify and use hyperlinks from within the manual to other sections of the manual.

In addition to the basic skills outlined above, the productive counselor will demonstrate the ability to
( ) Use the Windows Clipboard to copy text to Word for use with case notes, letters, and other documentation.
( ) Copy policy text to Outlook e-mail for review and collaboration
( ) Use the Search command with Boolean search parameters

<u>Intranet Services Reference Manual</u>

At the basic level counselor must show ability to
( ) Launch the Policy Manual using Internet Explorer
( ) Use the Topic Contents links to view major headings and sub-headings
( ) Use the Search link to search for web pages that contain keywords within the manual
( ) Use Explorer's "Find On This Page" command to find where key words are located on the web page. This is particularly useful with CPT codes.

In addition to the basic skills outlined above, the productive counselor will demonstrate the ability to
( ) Use the Windows Clipboard to copy text to Word for use with Employment Plan Services Worksheet, case notes, letters, and other documentation.
( ) Copy policy text to Outlook e-mail for review and collaboration
( ) Use the Search command with Boolean search parameters

HUMAN SERVICES MANAGERS INDIVIDUAL CHECK LIST

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

_____   _____
     COUNSELOR SIGNATURE   HUMAN SERVICES MANAGER

_____   _____
           DATE   DATE

1/25/2001

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COUNSELOR MANAGERS CHECKLIST
VOCATIONAL EVALUATORS
COMPETENCY STANDARDS
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Introduction to Employment in DRS and Vocational Evaluation Services
- General information to all staff
- Orientation to state employment
- History and Philosophy of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Staff roles in rehabilitation process and the vocational evaluation process - flow chart
  -Local office (mentoring)
  -Regional office
  -Central office
- Training and staff development opportunities
- Travel regulations

Vocational Rehabilitation Process
- Process and purpose of DRS services, including:
  - DRS mission
  - DRS's role/relationship with community partner agencies
  - Confidentiality
  - Client appeals process
  - General familiarity with DRS forms, manuals, etc.
  - Working knowledge of DRS status system
  - Familiarity with DRS financial participation policy
- Working knowledge of Vocational Evaluation's role within the VR process
  - Services that can be provided at different stages
- Working knowledge of DRS referral and intake process
  - Purpose of initial interview & Information collected
- Working knowledge of eligibility process
  - Basic familiarity with Certificate of Eligibility
  - Basic familiarity with DRS eligibility criteria
- Employment Plan Development and Implementation
  - Understanding the role and function of vocational evaluation services in the development of the IPE
  - Understanding the role of Vocational Evaluator as an ongoing member of the VR team
- Job Placement and Follow-up/Case Closure
  - Understanding the role and function of Vocational Evaluation during this stage (e.g., Job Analysis)

Vocational Evaluators should have:
- *General understanding of DRS mission and purpose through meetings with manager and/or a seasoned counselor*
- *Working knowledge of basic forms counselors utilize throughout the VR process through meetings with manager and or a seasoned counselor*
- *Observed at least two intake interviews conducted by a DRS counselor*
- *Observed at least two meetings with a DRS counselor and client where the Vocational Evaluator participates as a member of the team*

Contents of Vocational Evaluation
- Client's vocational interest
- Client's vocational goals
- Client's rehabilitation plans
- Performance skills and aptitudes
- Work related behaviors
- Transferable skills
- Physical capabilities
- Mental/Emotional Capabilities
- Learning Styles
- Independent Living Skills
- Job Seeking/Job Retention Skills
- Vocational Barriers to employment
- Functional limitations
- Assistive technology/devices
- Reasonable accommodation needs and modifications
- Other life interests

Types of Vocational Evaluation
- Comprehensive
- Special Assessment
- Consultation
- Situational Assessment
- WWRC Vocational Evaluations

Referral Process
- Admission Criteria
- Feasibility for DRS services with respect to employment
- Suitable vocational objectives
- Nature and Scope of Rehabilitation services to be provided
- Appropriate referrals
- Referral information
- Screening referrals

Vocational Evaluation Intake Process
- Group assessment
- Individual assessment
- Review of referral data

Vocational Evaluation Process
- Initial Interview
- Client orientation to Vocational Evaluation
- IVEP Development
- Goal Planning
- Test Selection - Psychometric, Work sample, Computerized
- Guidelines for work sample selection
- Testing environment
- Physical environment
- Emotional environment
- Test Modification
- Concluding testing
- Exit Interview
- Sharing Evaluation Results

- ➢ Sharing Behavioral Observation
- ➢ Discussing Results

Test Selection, Modification, Environment
- ➢ Knowledge of testing norms and standards
- ➢ Knowledge of statistical validity and reliability standards
- ➢ Knowledge of work sample systems
- ➢ Knowledge of psychometric tests
- ➢ Knowledge of aptitude tests
- ➢ Knowledge of achievement tests
- ➢ Knowledge of cluster traits, job samples, simulated work samples and single trait work samples
- ➢ Knowledge of appropriate test modifications and assistive technology
- ➢ Working knowledge of sources of Occupational Information (DOT, O'NET)
- ➢ Knowledge of appropriate testing environments

Communication with Client
- ➢ Communicate with client in functional, understandable language
- ➢ Explain overall purpose of vocational evaluation at onset
- ➢ Provide interpretation of individual test results throughout evaluation process
- ➢ Share behavioral observations and potential employment impact with client
- ➢ Discuss recommendations with client in a clear, concise manner
- ➢ Allow client opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions
- ➢ Ask clarifying questions to assess client's understanding of results/recommendations

Client's Role: Rights/Responsibilities
- ➢ Individualized vocational evaluation
- ➢ Integrated part in planning, assessment, and recommendation process
- ➢ Understanding of test results, documented behavioral observations, and recommendations
- ➢ Appeal option regarding any portion of the assessment process
- ➢ Confidentiality regarding all information

Vocational Evaluation Report: Vital Element
- ➢ Conclusions/recommendation with supporting documentation and justification
- ➢ Usable information regarding client's readiness to work
- ➢ Objective, descriptive behavioral observations
- ➢ Consideration of alternative job and training opportunities
- ➢ Identification of alternative to gainful, integrated employment
- ➢ Ancillary services, accommodations, or modifications
- ➢ Client's goals and response to recommendations

Vocational Evaluators should have:
- • *Working knowledge of Vocational Evaluation Reporting*
- • *Evaluators are required to write vocational evaluation reports independently*
- • *Evaluators should have working knowledge of evaluation process, ability to communicate effectively with clients, contents of evaluation, referral and intake process*
- • *Evaluator is required to select, modify assessments for clients independently*
- • *Evaluator is required to write a minimal of 5 vocational evaluation reports independently*
- • *Evaluators and Chief Evaluators will be able to monitor and evaluate the competency of the above areas according to the Standards and Best Practices Manual for Vocational Evaluation Services*

Job Analysis
- ➢ Understanding purpose & process
- ➢ Knowledgeable of the types of job analyses
- ➢ Develop knowledge of the local job market

- ➢ Conducting a Job Analysis
- ➢ Develop knowledge of exactly what local jobs require
- ➢ Increase knowledge regarding the development of transferable skills for vocational evaluation clients
- ➢ Assist the client and referral source in the assessment for reasonable accommodations
- ➢ Assist with the development of the IVEP
- ➢ Role of Job Analysis in developing/implementing the IPE
- ➢ Assist Supported employment personnel with appropriate job modification knowledge
- ➢ Provide assessments that are directly related to available jobs in the local community
- ➢ Develop test batteries and work samples that reflect actual job duties as they are found in the local job market
- ➢ Provide employers with information for development of job descriptions according to the Americans with Disability Act
- ➢ Collaboration with other professionals (Rehab. Engineer, job coach, job placement counselor, etc.)
- ➢ Reporting information from the Job Analysis

Vocational Evaluators should have:
- • *Working knowledge of Job Analysis and the ability to perform various types of job analyses independently*
- • *Evaluators should perform at least 2 job analyses with another evaluator and 2 job analyses independently*

Case Records
- ➢ Organization of Case Record
- ➢ Information necessary to provide Vocational Evaluation Services
- ➢ Case records maintenance/confidentiality
- ➢ Vocational Evaluation case records in context of DRS case records policy and procedure

Vocational Evaluators should have:
- • Working knowledge of DRS case records policy and procedure, including how VR cases are organized, what information is provided from specific VR forms (e.g., RS-4)
- • Met with Chief Evaluator and/or seasoned vocational evaluator to review vocational evaluation case records policy and procedure as identified in the Vocational Evaluation Standards and Best Practices manual (pp 32-33)

VRIS and Computer Skills Training
- ➢ Prerequisites: Basic understanding of the PC, Intro to Windows, basic understanding of logging onto and using a LAN/WAN (if office is networked)
- ➢ VRIS Module 1: Client Data Entry for Vocational Evaluation Services
- ➢ MS Word 6.0 Level
- ➢ Basic word processing skills
  -basic view commands
  -setting page margins and orientation
  -typing vocational evaluation reports in word formatting
  -basic formatting commands: font, paragraph, tabs
  -basic tools: Spell Check, Thesaurus, and AutoCorrect
  -Highlighting techniques with mouse and keyboard
  -Basic editing command: Copy, Cut, Paste, Undo
  -Basic print command and print preview
  -Use of on-line Help and Examples and Demos program
  -Use of toolbar shortcuts and reading the ruler
- ➢ Computer skills training

Vocational Evaluators should have:
- • *Working knowledge of VRIS for Evaluation entry and the ability to review forms, casework information as needed.*
- • *Working knowledge of keyboarding skills, typing at sufficient speed and accuracy*

- *Working knowledge of MS Word 6. 0 Level I is required. Level II and III can be obtained through Computer Skills Training*
- *Evaluators are required to be independent in MS Word-Level I function. Levels II and III can be obtained through training*